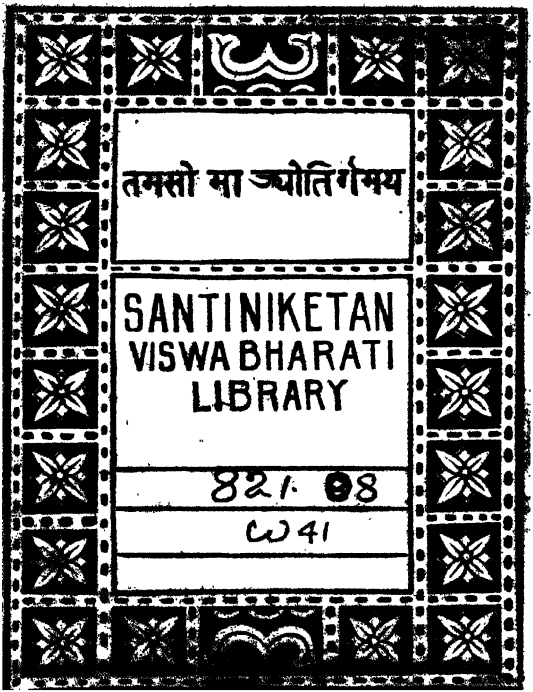
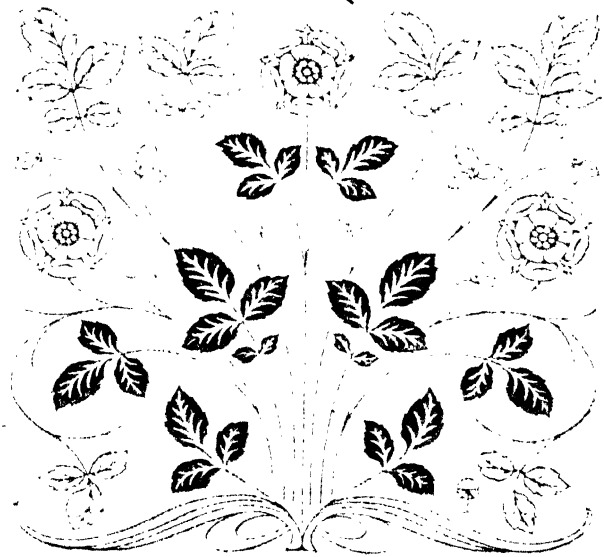

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POEMS · OF · THE LOVE · AND · PRIDE OF · ENGLAND

EDITED · BY · F · & · M WEDMORE



WARD · LOCK · & · COMPANY · LIM
ITED : LONDON · NEW YORK · &
MELBOURNE : MDCCCXCVII :

Preface

IF I write a Preface to a Collection of patriotic poems, the selection of which has chiefly fallen upon my daughter, while the Notes, explanatory and historical, are entirely hers, it is not for a moment that I feel myself qualified as Mr. Palgrave or Mr. Courthope, Mr. Gosse or Mr. Watts Dunton would have been, to furnish an essay on the characteristics of patriotic verse, but because the idea of the book having originated with me, and I having given it its name, and urged, and in a measure assisted in, its execution, it is felt that a few words are at least due from me as to its scheme and purpose. Before those words are written, let me make brief acknowledgment of the great personal satisfaction afforded by the sympathy and help we have so generally received from my illustrious contemporaries.

Some three or four years since, when — strange as it may appear in the light of those celebrations of loyalty and thanksgiving which have been witnessed in the summer that has just passed— there were still to be found in certain corners of England, either suburban or academic, superior persons who held that sentiments of pride and joy in the land were quite unworthy their intelligence, it occurred to me as curious that for a public on the whole duly instructed in Religion, and doubtless self-instructed in Love, there had not been provided any gentle body of teaching in Patriotic Virtue. From earlier days than Milton's, noble poetry had been written for the extolling of the glory and heroism of the land—not so much of it, however, the close student of the matter will find, as he may have been inclined to imagine. But in a time when selections and collections were in vogue everywhere, and the anthology was in every household and perhaps in every school, no serious effort had been made to cull from the poetic achievements of the Past and Present that which should be fairly representative of all the various moods and methods of patriotic verse. To my deep sense of that which was so singularly lacking is due this volume. And

the gap we now essay to fill may have been made only the more noticeable by the quite recent publication of at least one small book consisting of a liberal selection from some particular poet, with a few pleasant little additions from other and tolerably familiar hands.

The student of English Literature who does take note that whatever may be its actual wealth in patriotic poetry, the poetry of love and the poetry of religion exist, both of them, in more astonishing opulence, will find some explanation in the fact that while the worship of Heaven and the admiration of the opposite sex have been from all recorded time, a passionate love of England—what we call *England, to best express under one name the Empire's unity — and a pride in her performances, is an affair of but a few generations: of at most two or three centuries. Nor, in its earlier days, was it at all common. Some evidence of its comparatively recent growth—at all events of the increasing recognition of it as material for Literature — is afforded by the fact that while in working at this present compilation, care has been given to exclude as little as possible of the legacy of the Past, reliance has in the main had to be placed on modern pro-*

duction. Even contemporary work must count of necessity for a great deal; and contemporary and modern work is free from one of the objections felt most frequently in dealing with the spirited utterances of a bygone time—the objection, I mean, that its authors were not seldom inspired by the sincere feeling of the partisan, rather than of the patriot. A party spirit natural and inevitable, and not for a moment blameworthy, has been the cause of the rejection, for instance, of many attractive Cavalier songs; nor, upon the other side, did it seem quite fitting to us to include Milton's majestic Sonnet on Cromwell until we had been able to persuade ourselves that Cromwell at that time might in fairness be addressed, not as the head of a party, but as the representative of the great land of which he was the energetic son. Again, it scarcely requires to be said that only such Scottish and such Irish verse could be included here as rose beyond the expression of merely local attachment or local prowess, and had some bearing on the pride or the delight in the "ever-broadening England" of to-day.

The collection goes forth now, such as it is, with whatever may be its imperfections. We are responsible for most of them. We are not responsible,

though, for the omission of all extracts from the work of the great poet whose phrase I have this moment quoted. Messrs. Macmillan are the present holders of the copyright in the poetry of Tennyson, and it is they who, for reasons which we cannot question, have not in this instance seen their way to grant us our request and allow Tennyson to take his place amongst his peers, from Wordsworth to Browning. Fortunately, cheap issues have already made his work exceedingly accessible; yet we are none the less sorry that amongst great poets he should be the only absent one.

We first talked of this collection—as I have implied already — in days when, whether rightly or wrongly, I looked upon it as an advisable, even if it should be a humble and hardly needful stimulant to patriotic feeling, here at home, and it may be also over sea. To-day a voice of patriotism not to be mistaken — scarcely to be increased in volume, scarcely to be heightened in intensity—comes to us from every place, from men of every class in England—comes too from "the vast distances of the remote Imperial tracts." One, therefore, of the first objects of this volume scarcely remains to be fulfilled. Yet not now only, but during many years

of, it may be, varying fortunes, another of its aims may hope in some measure to be accomplished. Such an array of verse, inspired by great deeds and real affections, may remind us, old and young, what an inheritance indeed is ours—and what an obligation!

FREDERICK WEDMORE.

October, 1897.

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I

For the Victory at Agincourt

OUR king went forth to Normandy
With grace and might of chivalry;
The God for him wrought marvellously,
Wherefore England may call and cry
Deo gratias:
Deo gratias Anglia redde pro victoria.

He set a siege, the sooth for to say,
To Harfleur town with royal array;
That town he won, and made a fray,
That France shall rue to doomès day.
Deo gratias, etc

This ballad is taken from the Pepys' collection of songs. It was composed by the Poet Laureate of the day, according to Bishop Percy—to celebrate the victory of the 25th of October, 1415.

Then went our king, with all his host,
Through France for all the Frenchè boast;
He spared for dread of least, or most,
Till he came to Agincourt coast.
Deo gratias, etc.

Then for sooth that knight comely
In Agincourt field he fought manly,
Through grace of God most mighty,
He had both the field and the victory.
Deo gratias, etc.

Their dukes and earls, lord and baron
Were take, and slain, and that well soon,
And some were led into London
With joy, and mirth, and great renown.
Deo gratias, etc.

Now gracious God He save our king,
His people, and all his well-willing,
Give him good life, and good ending,
That we with mirth may safely sing
Deo gratias:
Deo gratias Anglia redde pro victoria.

2

AGINCOURT, OR THE ENGLISH BOWMEN'S GLORY

AGINCOURT, Agincourt!
Know ye not Agincourt?
Where English slew and hurt
All their French foemen?
With our jukes and bills brown,
How the French were beat down,
Shot by our bowmen!

Agincourt, Agincourt!
Know ye not Agincourt?
Never to be forgot
Or known to no men?
Where English cloth-yard arrows
Killed the French like tame sparrows
Slain by our bowmen.

* * * * *

The remark that our ancestors fought better than they wrote, suggested by some early ballads, can hardly be applied to this spirited song.

ANONYMOUS

Agincourt, Agincourt!
Know ye not Agincourt?
English of every sort,
 High men and low men,
Fought that day wondrous well,
All our old stories tell,
 Thanks to our bowmen.

Agincourt, Agincourt!
Know ye not Agincourt?
Where our fifth Harry taught
 Frenchmen to know men:
And when the day was done,
Thousands there fell to one
 Good English bowman.

Agincourt, Agincourt!
Know ye not Agincourt?
Dear was the victory bought
 By fifty yeomen.
Ask any English wench,
They were worth all the French:
 Rare English bowmen!

3

Lord Willoughby

THE fifteenth day of July,
With glistering spear and shield,
A famous fight in Flanders
Was foughten in the field:
The most conspicuous officers
Were English captains three,
But the bravest man in battel
Was brave Lord Willoughby.

From the *Roxburghe Ballads*, ancient songs and ballads chiefly collected by Robert, Earl of Oxford, purchased at the sale of the library of a certain Mr. West in 1773, and arranged and bound in the following year. The subtitle of this ballad is as follows: "A true relation of a famous and bloody battle fought in Flanders by the noble and valiant Lord Willoughby with fifteen hundred English against forty thousand Spaniards, where the English obtained a notable victory, to the glory and renown of our nation." Printed for F. Coles in Vine Street, near Hatton Garden. Peregrine Bertie, Lord Willoughby of Eresby, was made general of the English forces in the United Provinces in 1587, and showed great skill and courage in different actions against the Spaniards, one of which is described in this ballad.

The next was Captain Norris,
A valiant man was he:
The other, Captain Turner,
From field would never flee.
With fifteen hundred fighting men,
Alas! there were no more,
They fought with forty thousand then
Upon the bloody shore.

"Stand to it, noble pikemen,
And look you round about:
And shoot you right, you bowmen,
And we will keep them out:
You musquet and cailiver men,
Do you prove true to me,
I'll be the bravest man in fight,"
Says brave Lord Willoughby.

And then the bloody enemy
They fiercely did assail,
And fought it out most furiously,
Not doubting to prevail:
The wounded men on both sides fell
Most piteous for to see,

But nothing could the courage quell
 Of brave Lord Willoughby.

For seven hours to all men's view
 This fight endurèd sore,
Until our men so feeble grew
 That they could fight no more;
And then upon dead horses
 Full savourly they eat,
And drank the puddle water,
 That could no better get.

When they had fed so freely,
 They kneelèd on the ground,
And praisèd God devoutly
 For the favour they had found;
And bearing up their colours,
 The fight they did renew,
And cutting towards the Spaniard,
 Five thousand more they slew.

The sharp, steel-pointed arrows
 And bullets thick did fly;
Then did our valiant soldiers
 Charge on most furiously:

Which made the Spaniards waver,
They thought it best to flee:
They feared the stout behaviour
Of brave Lord Willoughby.

Then quoth the Spanish general,
"Come, let us march away,
I fear we shall be spoilèd all
If that we longer stay,
For yonder comes Lord Willoughby
With courage fierce and fell,
He will not give one inch of ground
For all the devils in hell."

And when the fearful enemy
Was quickly put to flight,
Our men pursued courageously
To rout his forces quite;
And at last they gave a shout
Which echoed through the sky:
"God, and St. George for England!"
The conquerors did cry.

This news was brought to England
With all the speed might be,

And soon our gracious Queen was told
 Of this same victory.
"O! this is brave Lord Willoughby,
 My love that ever won:
Of all the lords of honour
 'Tis he great deeds hath done!"

To the soldiers that were maimèd,
 And wounded in the fray,
The Queen allowed a pension
 Of fifteen-pence a day,
And from all costs and charges
 She quit and set them free:
And this she did all for the sake
 Of brave Lord Willoughby.

Then courage, noble Englishmen,
 And never be dismayed!
If that we be but one to ten,
 We will not be afraid
To fight with foreign enemies,
 And set our country free.
And thus I end the bloody bout
 Of brave Lord Willoughby.

4

The Honour of Bristol

ATTEND you, and give ear awhile,
And you shall understand
Of a battle fought upon the seas
By a ship of brave command.
The fight it was so glorious
Men's hearts it did fulfil,
And it made them cry, "To sea, to sea,
With the Angel Gabriel!"

This lusty ship of Bristol
Sailed out adventurously

From the *Roxburghe Ballads*, "showing how the *Angel Gabriel* of Bristol fought with three ships, who boarded us many times, wherein we cleared our decks, and killed five hundred of their men, and wounded many more, and made them fly into Calès, where we lost but three men, to the honour of the *Angel Gabriel* of Bristol. To the tune of '*Our Noble King in his Progress.*'" This and the preceding ballad are mentioned in a list of "small books, ballads, and histories," printed and sold by William Thackeray at the *Angel* in Duck Lane, the said list being included in the *Bagford Ballads*.

Against the foes of England,
 Her strength with them to try:
Well victualled, rigged, and manned she was,
 With good provision still,
Which made men cry, "To sea, to sea,
 With the Angel Gabriel!"

The Captain, famous Netherway
 (That was his noble name):
The Master—he was called John Mines-
 A mariner of fame:
The Gunner, Thomas Watson,
 A man of perfect skill:
With many another valiant heart
 In the Angel Gabriel.

They waring up and down the seas
 Upon the ocean main,
"It is not long ago," quoth they,
 "That England fought with Spain:
O would the Spaniard we might meet
 Our stomachs to fulfil!
We would play him fair a noble bout
 With our Angel Gabriel!"

They had no sooner spoken
But straight appeared in sight
Three lusty Spanish vessels
Of warlike trim and might;
With bloody resolution
They thought our men to spill,
And they vowed that they would make a prize
Of our Angel Gabriel.

Our gallant ship had in her
Full forty fighting men:
With twenty piece of ordnance
We played about them then,
With powder, shot, and bullets
Right well we worked our will,
And hot and bloody grew the fight
With our Angel Gabriel.

Our Captain to our Master said,
"Take courage, Master bold!"
Our Master to the seamen said,
"Stand fast, my hearts of gold!"
Our Gunner unto all the rest,
"Brave hearts, be valiant still!
Fight on, fight on in the defence
Of our Angel Gabriel!"

We gave them such a broadside,
It smote their mast asunder,
And tore the bowsprit off their ship,
Which made the Spaniards wonder,
And causèd them in fear to cry,
With voices loud and shrill,
"Help! help! or sunken we shall be
By the Angel Gabriel!"

So desperately they boarded us
For all our valiant shot,
Threescore of their best fighting men
Upon our decks were got;
And lo! at their first entrances
Full thirty did we kill,
And thus we cleared with speed the deck
Of our Angel Gabriel.

With that their three ships boarded us
Again with might and main,
But still our noble Englishmen
Cried out, "A fig for Spain!"
Though seven times they boarded us
At last we showed our skill,
And made them feel what men we were
On the Angel Gabriel.

Seven hours this fight continued:
So many men lay dead,
With Spanish blood for fathoms round
The sea was coloured red.
Five hundred of their fighting men
We there outright did kill,
And many more were hurt and maimed
By our Angel Gabriel.

Then, seeing of these bloody spoils,
The rest made haste away:
For why, they said, it was no boot
The longer there to stay.
Then they fled into Calès,
Where lie they must and will
For fear lest they should meet again
With our Angel Gabriel.

We had within our English ship
But only three men slain,
And five men hurt, the which, I hope
Will soon be well again.
At Bristol we were landed,
And let us praise God still,
That thus hath blest our lusty hearts
And our Angel Gabriel.

5

JOHN SKELTON

(1460–1529)

"From Verses presented to King Henry the Seventh at the Feast of S. George celebrated at Windsor in the third year of his reign."

O MOST famous noble king! thy fame doth spring and spread,
Henry the Seventh, our sovereign, in each region;

Skelton was Poet Laureate, (the laureateship then being a degree conferred at the University), and Rector of Diss, in Norfolk. Suspended from his functions by his diocesan, Richard Nykke, Bishop of Norwich, for having, according to Anthony Wood, "been guilty of certain crimes *as most poets are*, (the crimes in this instance seem chiefly to have consisted in scoffs and ill language against the monks, especially the Dominicans), he was pursued by Wolsey's officers, with orders to apprehend him, for reflecting on the character and actions of the cardinal. He took sanctuary at Westminster, where he was kindly entertained by John Islip, the abbot, and where he continued to the time of his death, and was buried either in the chancel of the church of S. Margaret, or in the churchyard.

All England hath cause thy grace to love and dread,
Seeing ambassadors sueth for protection,
For aid, help, and succour, which lieth in the election.
England, now rejoice, for joyous mayest thou be,
To see thy king so flourish in dignity.

* * * * *

Here this day S. George, patron of this place,
Honoured with the garter, chief of chivalry;
Chaplains singing procession, keeping the same,
With archbishops and bishops beseen nobly;[1]
Much people present to see the King Henry:
Wherefore now, S. George, all we pray to thee
To keep our sovereign in his dignity.

[1] Of a noble appearance.

6

Michael Drayton

(1563–1631)

From "Polyolbion"

OF *Albion's* glorious Isle the Wonders whilst I write,
The sundry varying soils, the pleasures infinite
(Where heat kills not the cold, nor cold expells the heat,
The calmes too mildly small, nor winds too roughly great,
Nor night doth hinder day, nor day the night doth wrong,
The Summer not too short, the Winter not too long)

The first eighteen books were published in 1612, and thought by Drummond of Hawthornden to be one of the smoothest poems he had seen in English,—indeed, he even went so far as to say that he should dare to compare some pieces in it with the best transmarine poems! It was also approved by Selden.

MICHAEL DRAYTON (1563–1631)

What help shall I invoke to aid my Muse the while?
Thou Genius of the place (this most renownèd Isle)
Which livedst long before the All-earth-drowning Flood,
Whilst yet the world did swarm with her Gigantic brood;
Go thou before me still thy circling shores about,
And in this wand'ring Maze help to conduct me out:
Direct my course so right, as with thy hand to show
Which way thy Forrests range, which way thy Rivers flow;
Wise Genius, by thy help that so I may discry
How thy fair Mountains stand, and how thy Valleys lie.

7

The Battle of Agincourt

FAIR stood the wind for France,
When we our sails advance,
Nor now to prove our chance
Longer will tarry;
But putting to the main,
At Caux, the mouth of Seine,
With all his martial train,
Landed King Harry.

And taking many a fort,
Furnished in warlike sort,
Marched towards Agincourt
In happy hour,
Skirmishing day by day
With those that stopped his way,
Where the French gen'ral lay
With all his power:

Which, in his height of pride,
King Henry to deride,

This ballad was published in 1627, with other poems written in the reign of James.

His ransom to provide
To the king sending;
Which he neglects the while
As from a nation vile,
Yet with an angry smile
Their fall portending.

And turning to his men,
Quoth our brave Henry then,
"Though they to one be ten,
Be not amazèd.
Yet have we well begun,
Battles so bravely won
Have ever to the sun
By fame been raisèd.

"And for myself," quoth he,
"This my full rest shall be:
England ne'er mourn for me,
Nor more esteem me;
Victor I will remain
Or on this earth lie slain;
Never shall she sustain
Loss to redeem me.

"Poitiers and Cressy tell,
When most their pride did swell,
Under our swords they fell;
No less our skill is
Than when our grandsire great,
Claiming the regal seat,
By many a warlike feat
Lopped the French lilies."

The Duke of York so dread
The eager raward led;
With the main Henry sped,
Amongst his henchmen;
Excester had the rear,
A braver man not there:
O Lord, how hot they were
On the false Frenchmen!

They now to fight are gone,
Armour on armour shone,
Drum now to drum did groan,
To hear was wonder;
That with the cries they make
The very earth did shake,
Trumpet to trumpet spake
Thunder to thunder.

MICHAEL DRAYTON (1563–1631)

Well it thine age became,
O noble Erpingham,
Which did the signal aim
To our hid forces!
When from a meadow by,
Like a storm suddenly,
The English archery
Struck the French horses.

With Spanish yew so strong,
Arrows a cloth-yard long,
That like to serpents stung,
Piercing the weather;
None from his fellow starts,
But playing manly parts,
And like true English hearts
Stuck close together.

When down their bows they threw,
And forth their bilbos drew,
And on the French they flew,
Not one was tardy;
Arms were from shoulders sent,
Scalps to the teeth were rent,
Down the French peasants went;
Our men were hardy.

This while our noble king,
His broadsword brandishing,
Down the French host did ding;
As to o'erwhelm it,
And many a deep wound lent,
His arms with blood besprent,
And many a cruel dent
Bruisèd his helmet.

Glo'ster, that duke so good,
Next of the royal blood,
For famous England stood,
With his brave brother;
Clarence, in steel so bright,
Though but a maiden knight,
Yet in that furious fight
Scarce such another!

Warwick in blood did wade,
Oxford the foe invade,
And cruel slaughter made,
Still as they ran up;
Suffolk his axe did ply,
Beaumont and Willoughby
Bare them right doughtily,
Ferrers and Fanhope.

MICHAEL DRAYTON (1563–1631)

Upon Saint Crispin's Day
Fought was this noble fray,
Which fame did not delay,
To England to carry.
Oh, when shall Englishmen
With such acts fill a pen,
Or England breed again
Such a King Harry?

8

William Shakspere

(1564–1616)

England

THIS royal throne of kings, this scepter'd isle,
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
This other Eden—demi-paradise,
This fortress, built by nature for herself
Against infection and the hand of war,
This happy breed of men, this little world,
This precious stone set in the silver sea,
Which serves it in the office of a wall
Or as a moat defensive to a house,
Against the envy of less happier lands,
This blessèd plot, this earth, this realm, this England,
This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings,

This speech from Richard II. is spoken by John of Gaunt to his brother, Edmund Langley, Duke of York.

Fear'd by their breed and famous by their birth,
Renownèd for their deeds as far from home,
For Christian service and true chivalry,
As is the sepulchre in stubborn Jewry
Of the world's ransom, blessèd Mary's son,
This land of such dear souls, this dear, dear land.

(Act II., Scene I.)

9

King Henry's Address to His Soldiers

ONCE more unto the breach, dear friends — once more,
Or close the wall up with our English dead!
In peace there's nothing so becomes a man
As modest stillness and humility;
But when the blast of war blows in our ears,
Then imitate the action of the tiger;
Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood,
Disguise fair nature with hard-favour'd rage;
Then lend the eye a terrible aspéct;
Let it pry through the portage of the head,
Like the brass cannon; let the brow o'erwhelm it,
As fearfully as doth a gallèd rock

Victory over England's ancient foe is the trumpet-note of "King Henry the Fifth," the "star of England," the hero of wise forethought and patriotic rhetoric. This rhetoric is, according to Dr. Furnival, the characteristic of the Histories of Shakspere's Second Period, to which this play belongs.

O'erhang and jutty his confounded base,
Swill'd with the wild and wasteful ocean.
Now set the teeth, and stretch the nostril wide;
Hold hard the breath, and bend up every spirit
To his full height! On, on, you noble English,
Whose blood is fet from fathers of war-proof!
Fathers that, like so many Alexanders,
Have, in these parts, from morn till even fought,
And sheath'd their swords for lack of argument.

(Act III., Scene I.)

10

England Invincible

THIS England never did, nor never shall,
Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror,
But when it first did help to wound itself.
Now these her princes are come home again,
Come the three corners of the world in arms,
And we shall shock them: naught shall make us rue,
If England to itself do rest but true.

(Act V., Scene VII.)

"King John," the play of "pathos and patriotism," from which this passage is taken, is, as Dr. Furnival points out, full of the spirit of Elizabethan England's defiance of the foreigner.

II

Ben Jonson

(1574–1637)

To my Lord the King, on the Christening of his second son, James.

METHOUGHT Great Britain in her sea before
Sat safe enough, but now securèd more.
At land she triumphs in the triple shade
Her rose and lily intertwined have made.

King James granted Ben Jonson a yearly pension of a hundred marks during his life, while Charles increased the amount and added thereto "a tierce of Canary Spanish wine yearly, out of His Majesty's cellars at Whitehall." Perhaps the epigram given here would, in its loyal dignity, have alone justified the favour.

12

William Browne

(1590–1645)

From "Britannia's Pastorals"

MY Muse for lofty pitches shall not roam,
But homely pipen of her native home:
And to the swains, love rural minstrelsy,
Thus, dear Britannia, will I sing of thee.

William Browne, of Exeter College, Oxford, and the Inner Temple, published in folio the first part of "Britannia's Pastorals" in his twenty-third year, some of the pastorals having been probably written before he was nineteen. This series of poems secured him the friendship of Selden, Drayton, and Ben Jonson. In 1616 he published the second part of the series, and in 1625 the two parts were reprinted in octavo. The gentlemen of the King's Library procured the use of the first edition of "Britannia's Pastorals" to include in the edition of Browne's poems, published by Thomas Davies, the bookseller, in three small volumes in 1772. Wharton has remarked in his *Milton* that the morning landscape of "L'Allegro" is an assemblage of the same objects which Browne had before collected in his "Britannia's Pastorals."

13

JOHN MILTON

(1608–1674)

To the Lord General Cromwell, May, 1652, on the proposals of certain ministers of the committee for propagation of the gospel.

CROMWELL, our chief of men, who through a cloud
Not of war only, but detractions rude,
Guided by faith and matchless fortitude,
To peace and truth thy glorious way hast ploughed,
And on the neck of crownèd Fortune proud
Hast reared God's trophies, and his work pursued,
While Darwen stream with blood of Scots imbrued,

This sonnet, technically one of Milton's poorest, with the exception of the first four lines, is included, as has been said in the Preface, because in it Cromwell is treated as the exponent of England's greatness.

And Dunbar field, resounds thy praises loud,
And Worcester's laureate wreath: yet much remains
To conquer still; Peace hath her victories
No less renowned than War: new foes arise
Threatening to bind our souls with secular chains.
Help us to save free conscience from the paw
Of hireling wolves, whose Gospel is their maw.

14

ANDREW MARVEL

(1620–1678)

From "England's Vote for a Free Election and Free Parliament"

GREAT God of Nations and their Right
By whose high Auspice Britain stands
So long, though first 'twas built on sands,
And oft had sunk but for Thy might

In her own Mainland-storms and Seas,
Be present to her now as then,
And let not proud and factious men
Oppose Thy will with what they please.

The poem from which these verses are taken, and which has been attributed to Marvel, would seem a fitting utterance of a man who, when member for Hull, and in poor circumstances, refused from Lord Treasurer Danby a bribe of a thousand pounds.

15

JOHN DRYDEN

(1631–1700)

Conclusion of "Annus Mirabilis."

METHINKS already from this chymic flame
I see a city of more precious mould,
Rich as the town which gives the Indies name,
With silver paved and all divine with gold.

Already, labouring with a mighty fate,
She shakes the rubbish from her mounting brow
And seems to have renewed her charter's date
Which Heaven will to the death of time allow.

Written, in part at least, at Lord Berkshire's seat of Charlton, close to Malmesbury, where Dryden seems to have mostly lived during 1665 and '66, "Annus Mirabilis" was published early in 1667, prefaced by a letter to his brother-in-law, Sir Robert Howard, and pronounced by Pepys "a very good poem." It is composed of quatrains on the "Gondibert" model, the quatrain being "more noble and full of dignity" than any other metre Dryden knew. These concluding stanzas, prophesying the greatness of London, are thought by Dr. Garnett to be, in their way, one of the finest things in the language.

More great than human now and more august,
New deified she from her fires does rise:
Her widening streets on new foundations trust,
And, opening, into larger parts she flies.

Before, she like some shepherdess did show
Who sate to bathe her by a river's side,
Not answering to her fame, but rude and low,
Nor taught the beauteous arts of modern pride.

Now like a maiden queen she will behold
From her high turrets hourly suitors come;
The East with incense and the West with gold
Will stand like suppliants to receive her doom.

The silver Thames, her own domestic flood,
Shall bear her vessels like a sweeping train,
And often wind, as of his mistress proud,
With longing eyes to meet her face again.

The wealthy Tagus and the wealthier Rhine
The glory of their towns no more shall boast,
The Seine, that would with Belgian rivers join,
Shall find her lustre stained and traffic lost,

The venturous merchant who designed more far
And touches on our hospitable shore,
Charmed with the splendour of this northern star,
Shall here unlade him and depart no more.

Our powerful navy shall no longer meet
The wealth of France or Holland to invade;
The beauty of this town without a fleet
From all the world shall vindicate her trade.

And while this famed emporium we prepare,
The British ocean shall such triumphs boast,
That those who now disdain our trade to share
Shall rob like pirates on our wealthy coast.

Already we have conquered half the war,
And the less dangerous part is left behind;
Our trouble now is but to make them dare
And not so great to vanquish as to find.

Thus to the Eastern wealth through storms we go,
And now, the Cape once doubled, fear no more;
A constant trade-wind will securely blow
And gently lay us on the spicy shore.

16

Alexander Pope

(1688–1744)

From "Windsor Forest"

YE vig'rous swains! while youth ferments your blood,
And purer spirits swell the mighty flood,
Now range the hills, the gameful woods beset,
Wind the shrill horn, or spread the waving net.
When milder autumn summer's heat succeeds,
And in the new-shorn field the partridge feeds,
Before his lord the ready spaniel bounds,
Panting with hope, he tries the furrow'd grounds;
But when the tainted gales the game betray,

Written between 1704 and 1712 at Binfield, his village home, nine miles from Windsor, this poem is based upon the "Cooper's Hill" of Sir John Denham. Wordsworth was pleased to say, as Mr. Leslie Stephen observes in his life of Pope, that the poet had here introduced almost the only "new images of internal nature" to be found between Milton and Thomson.

Couch'd close he lies, and meditates the prey:
Secure they trust th' unfaithful field beset,
'Till hov'ring o'er 'em sweep the swelling net.
This (if small things we may with great compare)
When Albion sends her eager sons to war,
Some thoughtless Town, with ease and plenty blest,
Near, and more near, the closing lines invest;
Sudden they seize th' amazed, defenceless prize,
And high in air Britannia's standard flies.
Oh wouldst thou sing what heroes Windsor bore,
What kings first breath'd upon her winding shore,
Or raise old warriors, whose ador'd remains
In weeping vaults her hallow'd earth contains!
With Edward's acts adorn the shining page,
Stretch his long triumphs down through every age,
Draw monarchs chain'd, and Cressi's glorious field,
The lilies blazing on the regal shield:
Then, from her roofs when Verrio's colours fall,
And leave inanimate the naked wall;
Still in thy song should vanquish'd France appear,

And bleed for ever under Britain's spear.
Behold! Augusta's [1] glitt'ring spires increase,
And Temples rise, the beauteous works of Peace.
I see, I see, where two fair cities bend
Their ample bow, a new Whitehall ascend!
There mighty nations shall inquire their doom,
The world's great Oracle in times to come;
There Kings shall sue, and suppliant States be seen
Once more to bend before a BRITISH QUEEN.

[1] Augusta, London.

17

JAMES THOMSON

(1700–1740)

Rule Britannia

WHEN Britain first at Heaven's command
Arose from out the azure main,
This was the charter of her land,
And guardian angels sung the strain:
Rule Britannia! Britannia rules the waves!
Britons never shall be slaves.

This song first appeared in a masque called "Alfred," in which the name of David Mallett is associated with that of Thomson, and some think he was the real author of this "political hymn". It was first sung, so far as we know, on the anniversary of Thomson's birthday, in 1790, at a meeting of the society of the Knights of the Cape at Ednam, "by the whole company on their legs," Lord Buchan tells us in a note to his Essay on Thomson, "with which this Attic entertainment concluded."

The nations not so blest as thee
 Must in their turn to tyrants fall,
Whilst thou shalt flourish great and free
 The dread and envy of them all.

Still more majestic shalt thou rise,
 More dreadful from each foreign stroke;
As the loud blast that tears the skies
 Serves but to root thy native oak.

Thee haughty tyrants ne'er shall tame;
 All their attempts to bend thee down
Will but arouse thy generous flame,
 And work their woe and thy renown.

To thee belongs the rural reign;
 Thy cities shall with commerce shine;
All thine shall be the subject main,
 And every shore it circles thine!

The Muses, still with Freedom found,
 Shall to thy happy coast repair;
Blest Isle, with matchless beauty crown'd,
 And manly hearts to guard the fair:—
Rule Britannia! Britannia rules the waves
 Britons never shall be slaves!

18

David Garrick

(1717–1779)

Hearts of Oak

COME, cheer up, my lads, 'tis to glory we steer,
To add something more to this wonderful year,
To honour we call you, not press you like slaves,
For who are so free as the sons of the waves?
Heart of oak are our ships, hearts of oak are our men,
We always are ready,
Steady, boys, steady,
We'll fight and we'll conquer again and again.

This poem is dated 1759, the year that saw Wolfe's victory on the Heights of Abraham.

We ne'er see our foes but we wish them to stay,
They never see us but they wish us away;
If they run, why we follow, and run them ashore,
For if they won't fight us we cannot do more.
Heart of oak are our ships, hearts of oak are our men,
We always are ready,
Steady, boys, steady,
We'll fight and we'll conquer again and again.

Still Britain shall triumph, her ships plough the sea,
Her standard be justice, her watchword "Be free";
Then cheer up my lads, with one heart let us sing,
Our Soldiers, our Sailors, our Statesmen, our King.
Heart of oak are our ships, hearts of oak are our men,
We always are ready,
Steady, boys, steady,
We'll fight and we'll conquer again and again.

19

William Cowper

(1731–1800)

From "The Task"

ENGLAND, with all thy faults, I love thee still,
My country! and while yet a nook is left
Where English minds and manners may be found,
Shall be constrained to love thee.

* * * * *

Time was when it was praise and boast enough
In every clime, and travel where we might,
That we were born her children; praise enough
To fill the ambition of a private man,
That Chatham's language was his mother tongue,

This "dash of warlike patriotism," as Mr. Goldwin Smith somewhat contemptuously calls it, occurs in the poem which made Cowper famous. It was suggested and inspired by Lady Austen, and originally called "The Sofa."

And Wolfe's great name compatriot with his own.
Farewell these honours, and farewell with them
The hope of such hereafter. They have fallen
Each in his field of glory; one in arms,
And one in council. Wolfe upon the lap
Of smiling victory that moment won,
And Chatham, heart-sick of his country's shame.
They made us many soldiers. Chatham still
Consulting England's happiness at home
Secured it by an unforgiving frown
If any wronged her. Wolfe where'er he fought,
Put so much of his heart into his act,
That his example had a magnet's force
And all were swift to follow whom all loved.
Those suns are set. Oh, rise some other such!

20

The Abolition of Slavery in England

SLAVES cannot breathe in England; if their lungs
Receive our air, that moment they are free.
They touch our country and their shackles fall.
That's noble, and bespeaks a nation proud
And jealous of the blessing. Spread it then,
And let it circulate through every vein
Of all your Empire, that where Britain's power
Is felt, mankind may feel her mercy too!

Written at the request of the opponents of the Slave Trade.

21

On the Loss of the "Royal George"

TOLL for the brave!
The brave that are no more!
All sunk beneath the wave,
Fast by their native shore!

Eight hundred of the brave,
Whose courage well was tried,
Had made the vessel heel,
And laid her on her side.

This poem was written at Weston under the influence of Lady Hesketh. It may be a question whether poems referring to national disasters ought to be inserted in such a volume as this, yet perhaps their inclusion is justified by incidental references to England's glory, such as are found in the "Royal George," but not, for instance, in Campbell's "Battlefield of Hastings," a poem which contains excellent lines, and which stands in other respects on the same footing as this one.

A land breeze shook the shrouds,
And she was overset;
Down went the Royal George,
With all her crew complete.

Toll for the brave!
Brave Kempenfelt is gone;
His last sea-fight is fought
His work of glory done.

It was not in the battle;
No tempest gave the shock;
She sprang no fatal leak;
She ran upon no rock:

His sword was in its sheath;
His fingers held the pen,
When Kempenfelt went down,
With twice four hundred men.

Weigh the vessel up,
Once dreaded by our foes!
And mingle with our cup
The tear that England owes.

Her timbers yet are sound,
And she may float again,
Full charged with England's thunder,
And plough the distant main.

But Kempenfelt is gone;
His victories are o'er;
And he and his eight hundred
Shall plough the wave no more.

22

WILLIAM COLLINS

(1721–1756)

From the "Ode to Liberty"

* * * * *

THE magic works, thou feel'st the strains,
One holier name alone remains;
The perfect spell shall then avail,
Hail Nymph, ador'd by Britain, hail!

* * * * *

Thy shrine in some religious wood,
O soul-enforcing Goddess, stood!

* * * * *

The Odes, on which Collins' fame with the public now rests, and which have always been the favourites of poets, were published by A. Millar in the Strand (1747). The composition and correction of the Odes occupied much of Collins' time. The "Ode to Liberty" is distinguished, says Mr. Moy Thomas in his Memoir of Collins, by "lofty imagery, love of allegory, and splendid visions."

There happier than in islands blest,
Or bowers by Spring or Hebe drest,
The chiefs who fill our Albion's story,
In warlike weeds, retir'd in glory,
Hear their consorted Druids sing
Their triumphs to th' immortal string.

* * * * *

How may the poet now unfold,
What never tongue or numbers told?
How learn, delighted and amaz'd,
What hands unknown that fabric rais'd?
Even now, before his favour'd eyes,
In Gothic pride it seems to rise!
Yet Grecia's graceful orders join,
Majestic thro' the mix'd design;
The secret builder knew to choose,
Each sphere-found gem of richest hues:
Whate'er heaven's purer mold contains,
When nearer suns emblaze its veins;
There on the walls the Patriot's sight
May ever hang with fresh delight,
And, grav'd with some prophetic rage
Read Albion's fame thro' every age.

23

PRINCE HOARE

(1754-1834)

The Arethusa

COME, all ye jolly sailors bold,
Whose hearts are cast in honour's mould,
While English glory I unfold,
Huzza for the Arethusa!
She is a frigate tight and brave,
As ever stemmed the dashing wave;
Her men are staunch
To their fav'rite launch,
And when the foe shall meet our fire,
Sooner than strike, we'll all expire
On board of the Arethusa.

This song is taken from *Lock and Key*, a "musical entertainment," performed at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden.

PRINCE HOARE (1754–1834)

'Twas with the spring fleet she went out
The English Channel to cruise about,
When four French sail, in show so stout
Bore down on the Arethusa.
The famed Belle Poule straight ahead did lie,
The Arethusa seemed to fly,
Not a sheet, or a tack,
Or a brace, did she slack;
Though the Frenchman laughed and thought it stuff,
But they knew not the handful of men, how tough,
On board of the Arethusa.

On deck five hundred men did dance,
The stoutest they could find in France;
We with two hundred did advance
On board of the Arethusa.
Our captain hailed the Frenchman, "Ho!"
The Frenchman then cried out, "Hallo!"
"Bear down, d'ye see,
To our Admiral's lee!"
"No, no," says the Frenchman, "that can't be!"
"Then I must lug you along with me,"
Says the saucy Arethusa.

THE ARETHUSA

The fight was off the Frenchman's land,
We forced them back upon their strand,
For we fought till not a stick could stand
Of the gallant Arethusa.
And now we've driven the foe ashore
Never to fight with Britons more,
Let each fill his glass
To his fav'rite lass;
A health to our captain and officers true,
And all that belong to the jovial crew
On board of the Arethusa.

24

Robert Burns
(1759–1796)

On the Thoughts of a French Invasion

DOES haughty Gaul invasion threat?
Then let the louns beware, sir:
There's wooden walls upon our seas,
And volunteers on shore, sir.
The Nith shall rin to Corsincon,
The Criffel sink in Solway,
Ere we permit a foreign foe,
On British ground to rally.

Oh, let us not, like snarling curs,
In wrangling be divided,
Till state! come in an unco loun,
And wi' a rung[1] decide it.
Be Britain still to Britain true,
Amang oursels united,
For never but by British hands
Maun British wrangs be righted!

It is interesting to compare Burns' treatment of this subject with Campbell's in No. 42.

[1] Cudgel.

25

William Lisle Bowles

(1762–1850)

A Distant View of England

AH! from mine eyes the tears unbidden start,
Albion! as now thy cliffs (that white appear
Far o'er the wave, and their proud summits rear
To meet the beams of morn) my beating heart

William Lisle Bowles has been called "The Father of Modern Poetry." He was educated at Winchester and Trinity College, Oxford; Vicar of Bremhill, Wilts; canon residentiary of Salisbury; and chaplain to the Prince Regent. Byron, who met him at Samuel Rogers', in London, speaks of him patronisingly as "a pleasant, gentlemanly man—a good fellow for a parson." Moore refers to him with delight as being so talented, yet so simple. He published a life of Pope, prefixed to a new edition of his poems, which led to the great controversy between Bowles on the one hand, and Byron and Campbell on the other. Finally Southey and Hazlitt came to the aid of Bowles, who was on the whole successful in his demonstration that Pope had been

WILLIAM LISLE BOWLES (1762–1850)

With eager hope and filial transport hails!
Scenes of my youth, reviving gales ye bring
As when erewhile the tuneful morn of spring
Joyous awoke amidst your blooming vales,
And filled with fragrance every painted plain:
Fled are those hours, and all the joys they gave,
Yet still I gaze, and count each rising wave
That bears me nearer to your haunts again;
If haply, 'mid those woods and vales so fair,
Stranger to peace, I yet may meet her there.

overrated. "But over all his poetry," says a biographer of this fierce controversialist, "lies a sweet, autumnal moonlight of pensive and gentle feeling." His sonnets are thought to have inspired Coleridge.

26

W. SMYTH

(1766–1849)

The Soldier

WHAT dreaming drone was ever blest,
By thinking of the morrow?
To-day be mine—I leave the rest
To all the fools of sorrow;
Give me the heart that mocks at care,
The heart, its own defender;
The spirits that are light as air,
And never beat surrender.

On comes the foe—to arms—to arms—
We meet—'tis death or glory;
'Tis victory in all her charms,
Or fame in Britain's story;

In 1806 Smyth published his one small volume of verse, "English Lyrics," which went through five editions.

W. SMYTH (1766–1849)

Dear native land! thy fortunes frown,
 And ruffians would enslave thee;
Thou land of honour and renown,
 Who would not die to save thee?

'Tis you, 'tis I, that meets the ball;
 And me it better pleases
In battle with the brave to fall,
 Than die of cold diseases;
Than drivel on in elbow-chair
 With saws and tales unheeded,
A tottering thing of aches and care,
 Nor longer loved nor needed.

But thou—dark is thy flowing hair,
 Thy eye with fire is streaming,
And o'er thy cheek, thy looks, thine air,
 Health sits in triumph beaming;
Then, brother soldier, fill the wine,
 Fill high the wine to beauty;
Love, friendship, honour, all are thine,
 Thy country and thy duty.

27

William Wordsworth

(1770–1850)

Sonnet Composed on the Seashore near Calais

FAIR star of evening, splendour of the west,
Star of my country!—on the horizon's brink
Thou hangest, stooping, as might seem, to sink
On England's bosom; yet well pleased to rest,
Meanwhile, and be to her a glorious crest
Conspicuous to the nations. Thou, I think,

The five sonnets here given are taken from those dedicated "To Liberty," written between 1802, the year of a French tour taken by the poet, and 1816. Mr. Myers calls the whole group "the most permanent record in our literature of the Napoleonic war," and "worthy of comparison with the noblest passages of patriotic verse or prose which all our history has inspired."

Shouldst be my country's emblem; and shouldst
wink,
Bright star, with laughter on her banners dress'd
In thy fresh beauty. There: that dusky spot
Beneath thee—it is England! there it lies.
Blessings be on you both! one hope, one lot,
One life, one glory! I with many a fear
For my dear country, many heartfelt sighs,
'Mong men who do not love her, linger here.

28

London, 1802

MILTON! thou shouldst be living at this hour:
England hath need of thee: she is a fen
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
Have forfeited their ancient English dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;
Oh! raise us up, return to us again;
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
Thy soul was like a star, and dwelt apart:
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea:
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
So didst thou travel on life's common way,
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on itself did lay.

29

WHEN I have borne in memory what has tamed
Great Nations, how ennobling thoughts depart
When men change swords for ledgers, and desert
The student's bower for gold, some fears unnamed
I had, my Country!—am I to be blamed?
But when I think of thee, and what thou art,
Verily, in the bottom of my heart,
Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.
But dearly must we prize thee; we who find
In thee a bulwark for the cause of men;
And I by my affection was beguiled.
What wonder if a poet now and then,
Among the many movements of his mind,
Felt for thee as a lover or a child!

30

IT is not to be thought of that the Flood
Of British freedom, which, to the open sea
Of the world's praise, from dark antiquity
Hath flowed, "with pomp of waters, unwithstood,"
Roused though it be full often to a mood
Which spurns the check of salutary bands,
That this most famous stream in bogs and sands
Should perish; and to evil and to good
Be lost for ever. In our halls is hung
Armoury of the invincible knights of old:
We must be free or die, who speak the tongue
That Shakespeare spake; the faith and morals hold
Which Milton held. In everything we are sprung
Of Earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

31

Thoughts of a Briton on the Subjugation of Switzerland

TWO Voices are there, one is of the Sea,
One of the Mountains, each a mighty voice:
In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,
They were thy chosen music, Liberty!

There came a tyrant, and with holy glee
Thou fought'st against him,—but hast vainly striven:
Thou from thy Alpine holds at length art driven
Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.

Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft;
Then cleave, O cleave to that which still is left—
For, high-soul'd maid, what sorrow would it be

That Mountain floods should thunder as before,
And Ocean bellow from his rocky shore,
And neither awful Voice be heard by Thee!

32

From the "Thanksgiving Ode"

WHO to the murmurs of an earthly string
Of Britain's acts would sing,
He with enraptured voice will tell
Of one whose spirit no reverse could quell:
Of one that, 'mid the failing, never failed.
Who paints how Britain struggled and prevail'd,
Shall represent her labouring with an eye
Of circumspect humanity;
Shall show her clothed with strength and skill,
All martial duties to fulfil;
Firm as a rock in stationary flight;
In motion rapid as the lightning's gleam:
Fierce as a flood-gate bursting in the night
To rouse the wicked from their giddy dream—
Woe, woe to all that face her in the field!
Appall'd she may not be, and cannot yield.

This is from the Ode for the Morning of the Day appointed for a general Thanksgiving — January 18, 1816—seven months after Waterloo. The personal allusion is, of course, to Wellington.

33

WALTER SCOTT (SIR)

(1771–1832)

The Field of Waterloo (*Conclusion*)

STERN tide of human Time! that know'st not rest,
But, sweeping from the cradle to the tomb,
Bear'st ever downward on thy dusky breast
Successive generations to their doom;
While thy capacious stream has equal room
For the gay bark where Pleasure's streamers sport,
And for the prison-ship of guilt and gloom,
The fisher-skiff, and barge that bears a court,
Still wafting onward all to one dark silent port;—

Composed in great part during a visit to Brussels, Waterloo, and Paris (July to September, 1815), Scott being one of the first civilians to visit the field of battle.

Stern tide of Time! through what mysterious change
Of hope and fear have our frail barks been driven!

For ne'er, before, vicissitude so strange
Was to one race of Adam's offspring given.
And sure such varied change of sea and heaven,
Such unexpected burst of joy and woe
Such fearful strife as that where we have striven,
Succeeding ages ne'er again shall know,
Until the awful term when Thou shalt cease to flow.

Well hast thou stood, my Country!—the brave fight
Hast well maintained through good report and ill;
In thy just cause and in thy native might,
And in Heaven's grace and justice constant still.
Whether the banded prowess, strength, and skill

Of half the world against thee stood arrayed,
Or when, with better views and freer will,
Beside thee Europe's noblest drew the blade,
Each emulous in arms the Ocean Queen to aid.

Well art thou now repaid—though slowly rose,
And struggled long with mists thy blaze of fame,
While like the dawn that in the orient glows
On the broad wave its earlier lustre came;
Then eastern Egypt saw the growing flame,
And Maida's myrtles gleamed beneath its ray,
Where first the soldier stung with generous shame,
Rivalled the heroes of the watery way,
And washed in foemen's gore unjust reproach away.

Now, Island Empress, wave thy crest on high,
And bid the banner of thy Patron flow,
Gallant Saint George, the flower of Chivalry,
For thou hast faced, like him, a dragon foe,
And rescued innocence from overthrow,
And trampled down, like him, tyrannic might,
And to the gazing world may'st proudly show

The chosen emblem of thy sainted Knight,
Who quelled devouring pride, and vindicated right.

Yet mid the confidence of just renown,
Renown dear-bought, but dearest thus acquired,
Write, Britain, write the moral lesson down:
'Tis not alone the heart with valour fired,
The discipline so dreaded and admired,
In many a field of bloody conquest known
—Such may by fame be lured, by gold be hired—
'Tis constancy in the good cause alone,
Best justifies the meed thy valiant sons have won.

34

In Memoriam: Nelson, Pitt, Fox

TO mute and to material things
New life revolving summer brings;
The genial call dead Nature hears,
And in her glory reappears.
But O my Country's wintry state,
What second spring shall renovate?
What powerful call shall bid arise
The buried warlike and the wise;
The mind that thought for Britain's weal,
The hand that grasped the victor steel?
The vernal sun new life bestows
Even on the meanest flower that blows;
But vainly, vainly may he shine,
Where glory weeps o'er Nelson's shrine;
And vainly pierce the solemn gloom,
That shrouds, O Pitt, thy hallowed tomb!

Another of Scott's "In Memoriam" poems, and one of his finest and most patriotic, is that *To the Memory of Edward the Black Prince.*

Deep graved in every British heart,
O never let those names depart!
Say to your sons, Lo, here his grave,
Who victor died on Gadite wave;
To him, as to the burning levin,
Short, bright, resistless course was given.
Where'er his country's foes were found
Was heard the fated thunder's sound,
Till burst the bolt on yonder shore,
Rolled, blazed, destroyed,—and was no more.

Nor mourn ye less his perished worth,
Who bade the conqueror go forth,
And launched that thunderbolt of war
On Egypt, Hafnia, Trafalgar;
Who, born to guide such high emprise,
For Britain's weal was early wise;
Alas! to' whom the Almighty gave,
For Britain's sins, an early grave!
His worth, who in his mightiest hour
A bauble held the pride of power,
Spurned at the sordid lust of pelf,
And served his Albion for herself;
Who, when the frantic crowd amain
Strained at subjection's bursting rein,

O'er their wild mood full conquest gained,
The pride he would not crush restrained,
Showed their fierce zeal a worthier cause,
And brought the freeman's arm to aid the freeman's laws.

Hadst thou but lived, though stripped of power,
A watchman on the lonely tower,
Thy thrilling trump had roused the land,
When fraud or danger were at hand;
By thee, as by the beacon-light,
Our pilots had kept course aright;
As some proud column, though alone,
Thy strength had propped the tottering throne:
Now is the stately column broke,
The beacon-light is quenched in smoke,
The trumpet's silver sound is still,
The warder silent on the hill!

O think, how to his latest day,
When death, just hovering, claimed his prey
With Palinure's unaltered mood
Firm at his dangerous post he stood;
Each call for needful rest repelled,
With dying hand the rudder held,

Till in his fall with fateful sway,
The steerage of the realm gave way!
Then, while on Britain's thousand plains
One unpolluted church remains,
Whose peaceful bells ne'er sent around
The bloody tocsin's maddening sound,
But still, upon the hallowed day,
Convoke the swains to praise and pray;
While faith and civil peace are dear,
Grace this cold marble with a tear,—
He, who preserved them, Pitt, lies here!

Nor yet suppress the generous sigh,
Because his rival slumbers nigh;
Nor be thy requiescat dumb,
Lest it be said o'er Fox's tomb.
For talents mourn, untimely lost,
When best employed, and wanted most;
Mourn genius high, and love profound,
And wit that loved to play, not wound;
And all the reasoning powers divine,
To penetrate, resolve, combine;
And feelings keen, and fancy's glow,—
They sleep with him who sleeps below:
And if thou mourn'st they could not save

From error him who owns this grave,
Be every harsher thought suppressed,
And sacred be the last long rest.
Here, where the end of earthly things
Lays heroes, patriots, bards, and kings;
Where stiff the hand, and still the tongue,
Of those who fought, and spoke, and sung;
Here, where the fretted aisles prolong
The distant notes of holy song,
As if some angel spoke agen,
"All peace on earth, good-will to men";
If ever from an English heart,
O, here let prejudice depart,
And, partial feeling cast aside,
Record, that Fox a Briton died!
When Europe crouched to France's yoke,
And Austria bent, and Prussia broke,
And the firm Russian's purpose brave
Was bartered by a timorous slave,
Even then dishonour's peace he spurned,
The sullied olive-branch returned,
Stood for his country's glory fast,
And nailed her colours to the mast!
Heaven, to reward his firmness, gave
A portion in this honoured grave,

And ne'er held marble in its trust
Of two such wondrous men the dust.
With more than mortal powers endowed,
How high they soared above the crowd!
Theirs was no common party race,
Jostling by dark intrigue for place;
Like fabled Gods, their mighty war
Shook realms and nations in its jar;
Beneath each banner proud to stand,
Looked up the noblest of the land,
Till through the British world were known
The names of Pitt and Fox alone.
Spells of such force no wizard grave
E'er framed in dark Thessalian cave,
Though his could drain the ocean dry,
And force the planets from the sky.
These spells are spent, and, spent with these
The wine of life is on the lees.
Genius, and taste, and talent gone,
For ever tombed beneath the stone,
Where—taming thought to human pride!—
The mighty chiefs sleep side by side.
Drop upon Fox's grave the tear,
'Twill trickle to his rival's bier;
O'er Pitt's the mournful requiem sound,

And Fox's shall the notes rebound.
The solemn echo seems to cry,—
"Here let their discord with them die.
Speak not for those a separate doom
Whom fate made Brothers in the tomb;
But search the land of living men,
Where wilt thou find their like agen?"

35

The Bold Dragoon

'TWAS a Maréchal of France, and he fain would honour gain,
And he longed to take a passing glance at Portugal from Spain ;
With his flying guns this gallant gay,
And boasted *corps d'armée*—
O he feared not our dragoons, with their long swords, boldly riding,
Whack, fal de ral, etc.

To Campo Mayor come, he had quietly sat down,
Just a fricassee to pick, while his soldiers sacked the town,
When, 'twas *peste ! morbleu ! mon Général,*
Hear the English bugle-call !
And behold the light dragoons, with their long swords, boldly riding,
Whack, fal de ral, etc.

Right about went horse and foot, artillery and all,
And, as the devil leaves a house, they tumbled through the wall ;[1]
They took no time to seek the door,
But, best foot set before—
O they ran from our dragoons, with their long swords, boldly riding,
Whack, fal de ral, etc.

Those valiant men of France they had scarcely fled a mile
When on their flank there soused at once the British rank and file ;
For Long, De Grey, and Otway, then
Ne'er minded one to ten,
But came on like light dragoons, with their long swords, boldly riding,
Whack, fal de ral, etc.

[1] In their hasty evacuation of Campo Mayor the French pulled down a part of the rampart, and marched out over the glacis.

THE BOLD DRAGOON

Three hundred British lads they made three thousand reel,
Their hearts were made of English oak, their swords of Sheffield steel,
Their horses were in Yorkshire bred,
And Beresford them led;
So huzza for brave dragoons, with their long swords, boldly riding,
Whack, fal de ral, etc.

Then here's a health to Wellington, to Beresford, to Long,
And a single word of Bonaparte before I close my song:
The eagles that to fight he brings
Should serve his men with wings,
When they meet the bold dragoons, with their long swords, boldly riding,
Whack, fal de ral, etc.

36

Charles Dibdin

(1772–1842)

The True English Sailor

JACK dances and sings, and is always content,
In his vows to his lass he'll ne'er fail her;
His anchor's a-trip when his money's all spent—
And this is the life of a sailor.

Alert in his duty, he readily flies,
Where the winds the tir'd vessel are flinging,

Dibdin at first published one song weekly, together with an essay, for sixpence, under the name of the "By-stander," but becoming more popular, he sold his songs for a shilling and half a crown each "at a shop,—I beg his pardon—a warehouse, in the Strand," says an offended biographer whom Dibdin had refused to supply with any facts about his life. It is to these songs that we owe much of the revival of patriotism under George III.

THE ENGLISH SAILOR

Though sunk to the sea-gods, or toss'd to the skies,
Still Jack is found working and singing.

'Longside of an enemy, boldly and brave,
He'll with broadside on broadside regale her;
Yet he'll sigh to the soul o'er that enemy's grave,—
So noble's the mind of a sailor.

Let cannons roar loud, burst their sides let the bombs,
Let the winds a dread hurricane rattle,
The rough and the pleasant he takes as it comes,
And laughs at the storm and the battle.

In a Fostering Power while Jack puts his trust,
As Fórtune comes, smiling he'll hail her;
Resign'd still, and manly, since what must be must—
And this is the mind of a sailor.

Though careless and headlong, if danger should press,
And rank'd 'mongst the free list of rovers,

CHARLES DIBDIN (1772–1842)

Yet he'll melt into tears at a tale of distress,
And prove the most constant of lovers.

To rancour unknown, to no passion a slave,
Nor unmanly, nor mean, nor a railer,
He's gentle as mercy, as fortitude brave—
And this is a true English sailor.

37

Nelson's Victory at Trafalgar

THEN let us rejoice, for old England so glorious
A victory never was seen;
We have often o'er five, nine, eleven been victorious,
But now we have taken nineteen;
Yet 'twas earned by a wound that for years will want healing,
A wound that at sea and ashore,
Every Briton shall mourn with one heart and one feeling,
Our hero, great Nelson's no more.

I sail'd with him often in pretty hard service,
More than once saw him wounded and smile;
I was there when he gain'd such renown under Gervis,
And he pepper'd the French on the Nile.

I heard his last words that so grieved each by-
stander,
Words sounding so mournful and sweet,
'Twas "his love and farewell!"—D—— me,
there's a commander—
"To each brother tar in the fleet."

But he's gone, and so nobly the French and the
Spaniards
Have been lathered, fore, aft, back and sides,
That we have not left a rope from the shrouds
to the laniards,
For in fighting we work'd double tides:
And the notion's a right one;—ah, where's such
another
We've lost!—why, the count's without end,
The king a great subject, each sailor a brother,
And every Briton a friend.

38

England's Tree of Liberty

WHEN Freedom knew not where to rove,
From conquer'd Greece and groaning Rome
At random driv'n like Noah's dove,
Without a shelter or a home,
Th' expanded world she view'd, where best
She might repose her weary foot;
Saw this our isle, set up her rest,
And bade the spreading oak take root;
Bade it adorn the land and be
Fair England's Tree of Liberty.

Thus spoke the goddess—This fair tree,
The tow'ring forest's kingly boast,—
Let my behests kept sacred be,—
This tree shall guard your sea-girt coast:
Freedom's behests are these— To know
No faction, no cabal, no cause,
From whose pestif'rous breath may grow
Aught 'gainst the monarch or the laws;

Keep sacred these, the oath shall be—
Fair England's Tree of Liberty.

Its friendly arms, that, on their way,
Those succour who its aid implore,
A faithful portrait shall display
Of England's hospitable shore:
Of England's courage this fair tree,
A great example to impart,
To succour law and liberty,
Shall make a rampart of its heart:
Hail, sacred oak! then deign to be
Fair England's Tree of Liberty.

Then catch the enthusiastic strain;
Hail Freedom's tree in fervent hymns,
That freely on the awful main,
Launches in Britain's cause its limbs;
That mighty walls and bulwarks forms,
Whence England's thunder shall be hurl'd;
And spite of battles and of storms,
That bears our commerce through the world:
Hail Freedom's shrine! still deign to be
Fair England's Tree of Liberty.

39

Robert Southey

(1774–1843)

From the "Ode written during the Negociations with Buonaparte"

WOE, woe to England! woe and endless shame,
If this heroic land,
False to her feelings and unspotted fame,
Hold out the olive to the Tyrant's hand!
Woe to the world if Buonaparte's throne
Be suffered still to stand!

This Ode was written at Keswick, in January, 1814.

40

THOMAS CAMPBELL

(1777–1844)

The Launch of a First-rate

ENGLAND hails thee with emotion,
Mightiest child of naval art,
Heaven resounds thy welcome! Ocean
Takes thee smiling to his heart.

Giant oaks of bold expansion
O'er seven hundred acres fell,
All to build thy noble mansion,
Where our hearts of oak shall dwell.

The launch which suggested this poem took place at Chatham on September 29th, 1840, on which occasion "Ye Mariners of England" was sung. Campbell was present with his friend Dr. Beattie, his executor, and eventually the editor of his "Life and Letters."

LAUNCH OF A FIRST-RATE

'Midst those trees the wild deer bounded,
 Ages long ere we were born,
And our great-grandfathers sounded
 Many a jovial hunting-horn.

Oaks that living did inherit
 Grandeur from our earth and sky,
Still robust, the native spirit
 In your timbers shall not die.

Ships to shine in martial story,
 Thou shalt cleave the ocean's path
Freighted with Britannia's glory
 And the thunders of her wrath.

Foes shall crowd their sails and fly thee,
 Threatening havoc to their deck,
When afar they first descry thee,
 Like the coming whirlwind's speck.

Gallant bark! thy pomp and beauty
 Storm or battle ne'er shall blast,
Whilst our tars in pride and duty
 Nail thy colours to the mast.

41

The Battle of the Baltic

OF Nelson and the North
Sing the glorious day's renown,
When to battle fierce came forth
All the might of Denmark's crown,
And her arms along the deep proudly shone;
By each gun the lighted brand
In a bold determined hand,
And the Prince of all the land
Led them on.

Like leviathans afloat,
Lay their bulwarks on the brine;
While the sign of battle flew
On the lofty British line:

The "gallant good Riou," referred to in this poem was so called by Lord Nelson when he wrote home his despatches.

BATTLE OF THE BALTIC

It was ten of April morn by the chime:
As they drifted on their path,
There was silence deep as death;
And the boldest held his breath,
For a time.

But the might of England flushed
To anticipate the scene;
And her van the fleeter rushed
O'er the deadly space between.
"Hearts of oak!" our captains cried; when each gun
From its adamantine lips
Spread a death-shade round the ships,
Like the hurricane eclipse
Of the sun.

Again! again! again!
And the havoc did not slack,
Till a feeble cheer the Dane,
To our cheering sent us back;—
Their shots along the deep slowly boom:—
Then ceased—and all is wail,
As they strike the shattered sail;

Or, in conflagration pale
Light the gloom.

Now joy, Old England, raise
For the tidings of thy might,
By the festal cities' blaze,
Whilst the wine-cup shines in light;
And yet amidst that joy and uproar,
Let us think of them that sleep
Full many a fathom deep
By thy wild and stormy steep,
Elsinore!

42

Stanzas on the Threatened Invasion

OUR bosoms we'll bare for the glorious strife,
And our oath is recorded on high,
To prevail in the cause that is dearer than life,
Or crushed in its ruins to die!
Then rise, fellow-freemen, and stretch the right hand,
And swear to prevail in your dear native land!

'Tis the home we hold sacred is laid to our trust—
God bless the green Isle of the brave!
Should a conqueror tread on our forefathers' dust,

These stanzas were written in the year of Campbell's coming to London, and of his marriage.

It would rouse the old dead from their grave!
Then rise, fellow-freemen, and stretch the right hand,
And swear to prevail in your dear native land!

In a Briton's sweet home shall a spoiler abide,
Profaning its loves and its charms?
Shall a Frenchman insult the loved fair at our side?
To arms! O my Country, to arms!
Then rise, fellow-freemen, and stretch the right hand,
And swear to prevail in your dear native land!

Shall a tyrant enslave us, my countrymen!—No!
His head to the sword shall be given—
A death-bed repentance be taught the proud foe,
And his blood be an offering to Heaven!
Then rise, fellow-freemen, and stretch the right hand,
And swear to prevail in your dear native land!

43

The British Grenadiers

UPON the plains of Flanders,
Our fathers, long ago,
They fought like Alexanders
Beneath brave Marlborough!
And still, in fields of conquest,
Our valour bright has shone
With Wolfe and Abercrombie,
And Moore, and Wellington!

Our plumes have waved in combats
That ne'er shall be forgot
Where many a mighty squadron
Reeled backward from our shot:
In charges with the bayonet
We lead our bold compeers,
But Frenchmen like to stay not
For the British Grenadiers!

Once boldly at Vimiera,[1]
 They hoped to play their parts,
And sang *fal-lira-lira*,
 To cheer their drooping hearts:
But, English, Scots and Paddy Whacks,
 We gave three noble cheers,
And the French soon turned their backs
 To the British Grenadiers!

At St. Sebastiano's
 And Badajos's town
Where, raging like volcanoes
 The shot and shells came down,
With courage never wincing,
 We scaled the ramparts high,
And waved the British ensign
 In glorious victory!

And what could Bonaparté,
 With all his cuirassiers,
At Waterloo, in battle do
 With British Grenadiers?—

[1] At Vimiera, the French ranks advanced *singing*, the British only cheered.

Then ever sweet the drum shall beat
That march unto our ears,
Whose martial roll awakes the soul
Of British Grenadiers!

44

Ye Mariners of England

YE Mariners of England!
That guard our native seas;
Whose flag has braved a thousand years
The battle and the breeze!
Your glorious standard launch again
To match another foe!
And sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow;
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

The spirits of your fathers
Shall start from every wave!
For the deck it was their field of fame,
And Ocean was their grave:
Where Blake and mighty Nelson fell
Your manly hearts shall glow,

This poem was written at Hamburg, where Campbell stayed for some weeks at a time when the war with Denmark was already in prospect.

YE MARINERS OF ENGLAND

As ye sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow;
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

Britannia needs no bulwarks,
No towers along the steep;
Her march is o'er the mountain-waves,
Her home is on the deep.
With thunders from her native oak
She quells the floods below,
As they roar on the shore,
When the stormy winds do blow;
And the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

The meteor flag of England
Shall yet terrific burn;
Till danger's troubled night depart,
And the star of peace return.
Then, then, ye ocean warriors!
Our song and feast shall flow
To the fame of your name,
When the storm has ceased to blow;
When the fiery fight is heard no more,
And the storm has ceased to blow.

45

CHARLES WOLFE

(1791–1823)

From the "Battle of Busaco; deliverance of Portugal"

* * * * *

TO Britain, glorious Britain, will I call,
Her bulwark, valour,—and the sea, her wall.
Around her crest, Gaul's javelins idly play,
And glance with baffled impotence away;
Her hands the reddening bolts of vengeance bear,
Fate's on her helm, and death upon her spear;

Charles Wolfe was born in Dublin, being a grandson on his mother's side of Peter Lombard, and descendant of the hero of Quebec. Educated at Bath and Salisbury and at Winchester, where he was the pride of the school, he entered Dublin University in 1809, where, becoming a college tutor, "he was so prodigal of his labour and of his time to each pupil," says his friend and sole biographer, Archdeacon Russell (of Clogher), "that he reserved little leisure for his

She scorns at Victory's shrine her vows to pay,
She grasps the laurel, she commands the day.
England, what! ho!—as thus the spectre spoke,
All Lisbon's turrets to their bases shook:—
England, what! ho!—again the spectre cried,
And trembling Tagus heaved with all his tide.
England, to arms!—at this dread call, advance!
Assist, defend, protect!—now tremble, France!—
He spoke,—then plunged into the river's breast,

own pursuits and relaxations." During his residence in college most of his poems were written, including the two given here. He studied for a fellowship, but made little progress, owing to his slowness in working—"the examination of a single metaphysical speculation of Locke, or a moral argument of Butler, costing him more time and thought than would carry ordinary minds through a whole volume" (Arch. Russell). He became curate in charge of Donoughmore, in the diocese of Armagh, where he lived an ideal life of devotion and self-sacrifice, almost worshipped by his peasant congregation. After going for his health to Exeter and Bordeaux, he died of consumption, at Cork, in his 32nd year.

"The Battle of Busaco" refers to the success of the allied armies of England and Portugal in delivering the latter country from the usurpation of France (Sept., 1810), Wellington's position on the highest point of the sierra proving impregnable. Busaco had long been famous as the only "desert" in the kingdom belonging to the bare-footed Carmelites.

And Tagus wrapped him in his billowy vest.
O'er seas, o'er shores the solemn summons pass'd,
It rode upon the pinions of the blast:
The midnight shades are gone, the glooms are fled,
See! the dawn broke as Britain rear'd her head!
With Albion's spear upon her shield she smote;
Through every island rung the inspiring note.
Roused at the sound, the English lion rose,
And burnt to meet hereditary foes;
From Highland rocks came every Scottish clan;
Forward rush'd Erin's sons, and led the van:
The Usurper shook,—then sent each chief of name,
Partners of Victory, sharers of his fame,
Who bore Gaul's standard through the hostile throng,
While Lodi trembled as they rush'd along;
Who traversed Egypt's plains, and Syria's waste,
And left a red memorial where they pass'd;
Who bathed, midst French and Austrian heaps of slain,
Their gory footsteps on Marengo's plain:
And those who laid the Prussian glories low,
Yet felt a Brunswick's last expiring blow;

Who on Vimeira's heights were taught to feel
The vengeful fury of a freeman's steel;
Who hung on British Moore in his retreat,
And purchased dear experience by defeat.
Such were the chiefs that Gaul's battalia led;—
Yet England came, they met her, and they fled.
At dark Busaco's foot stood France's might,
The hopes of Britain occupied the height.
Gaul's mantling terrors to the summit tend,—
Hold, Britain, charge not,—the attack suspend;—
Hush'd be the British whirlwind,—not a breath
Be heard within thy host,—be still as death!—
With gathering gloom comes France's dark array,—
Rest, Britain, on thy arms,—thy march delay—
See! France has gain'd the summit of the hill!
See! she advances! Soldier, yet be still—
She's at our bayonets,—touches every gun,—
Now speed thee, England! and the work is done.—

* * * * *

Heard ye that burst of joy? From Beira's coast
To Algarve's southern boundaries it crost;
It pass'd from undulating Tagus' source,
And burst where Gaudiana holds his course.

Farewell! proud France! (they cried) thy power is broke;
Farewell for ever to thy iron yoke!
But blest for ever be old Ocean's queen,
Still on his bosom may she reign serene.
When on these plains our future offspring gaze,
To them our grateful heart shall sound thy praise.
To Britain's generous aid these plains we owe,
For us she drew the sword, and bent the bow.
We sunk, we crouch'd beneath a tyrant's hand—
Victorious Britain loosed the usurper's band.
We bow'd to France, obey'd each stern decree,—
Majestic Britain rose—and all was free.

46

After Corunna

NOT a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
As his corse to the rampart we hurried;
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
O'er the grave where our hero we buried.

We buried him darkly at dead of night,
The sods with our bayonets turning,
By the struggling moonbeam's misty light,
And the lantern dimly burning.

This poem first appeared, without Wolfe's knowledge, in the *Newry Telegraph*, from which it was copied into most of the London and Dublin papers, and finally into the *Edinburgh Annual Register*, in which the paragraph had appeared that inspired the poem. In this form it was read to Shelley and other friends by Byron, to justify his opinion that it was little inferior to the best which that prolific age had brought forth, the third verse being "perfect." "I should have taken the whole," said Shelley, with hasty and shallow criticism, "for a rough sketch of Campbell's." "No," replied Lord Byron, "Campbell would have claimed it if it had been his."

No useless coffin enclosed his breast,
Nor in sheet nor in shroud we wound him;
But he lay like a warrior taking his rest
With his martial cloak around him.

Few and short were the prayers we said,
And we spoke not a word of sorrow;
But we steadfastly gazed on the face that was dead,
And we bitterly thought of the morrow.

We thought, as we hollowed his narrow bed
And smoothed down his lonely pillow,
How the foe and the stranger would tread o'er his head,
And we far away on the billow!

Lightly they'll talk of the spirit that's gone,
And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him;
But little he'll reck, if they let him sleep on
In the grave where a Briton has laid him.

But half of our heavy task was done,
When the clock struck the hour for retiring;
And we heard the distant and random gun
That the foe was sullenly firing.

AFTER CORUNNA

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
From the field of his fame fresh and gory;
We carved not a line, and we raised not a stone—
But we left him alone with his glory.

47

FREDERICK MARRYAT

(1792–1848)

The Old Navy

THE captain stood on the carronade: "First lieutenant," says he,
"Send all my merry men aft here, for they must list to me;
I haven't the gift of the gab, my sons—because I'm bred to the sea;
That ship there is a Frenchman, who means to fight with we.
And odds bobs, hammer and tongs, long as I've been to sea,
I've fought 'gainst every odds—but I've gained the victory!

This song is sung by Jemmy Ducks in *Snarleyyow, or the Dog Fiend* (1837).

That ship there is a Frenchman, and if we don't
take *she*,
'Tis a thousand bullets to one, that she will cap-
ture *we*;
I haven't the gift of the gab, my boys; so each
man to his gun;
If she's not mine in half an hour, I'll flog each
mother's son.
For odds bobs, hammer and tongs, long as
I've been to sea,
I've fought 'gainst every odds—and I've gained
the victory!"

We fought for twenty minutes, when the French-
man had enough;
"I little thought," said he, "that your men were
of such stuff;"
Our captain took the Frenchman's sword, a low
bow made to *he*;
"I haven't the gift of the gab, monsieur, but
polite I wish to be.
And odds bobs, hammer and tongs, long as
I've been to sea,
I've fought 'gainst every odds—and I've gained
the victory!"

Our captain sent for all of us: "My merry men," said he,
"I haven't the gift of the gab, my lads, but yet I thankful be:
You've done your duty handsomely, each man stood to his gun;
If you hadn't, you villains, as sure as day, I'd have flogged each mother's son.
For odds bobs, hammer and tongs, as long as I'm at sea,
I'll fight 'gainst every odds—and I'll gain the victory!"

48

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

(1792–1822)

From "The Masque of Anarchy"

MEN of England, Heirs of Glory,
Heroes of unwritten story,
Nurslings of one mighty mother,
Hopes of her, and one another,

Rise, like lions after slumber,
In unvanquishable number!
Shake your chains to earth like dew,
Which in sleep has fallen on you.
Ye are many . . . they are few.

* * * * *

Shelley was living at Villa Valsovano, near Leghorn, writing "The Cenci," when the news reached him of the "Manchester Massacre" (or, in the words of Green, of the "breaking up by military force of a meeting assembled for the purpose of

"Let the laws of your own land,
Good or ill, between ye stand,
Hand to hand, and foot to foot,
Arbiters of the dispute:

"The old laws of England; they
Whose reverend heads with age are grey,
Children of a wiser day;
And whose solemn voice must be
Thine own echo . . . Liberty!

"On those who first should violate
Such sacred heralds in their state
Rest the blood that must ensue,
And it will not rest on you.

"And if then the tyrants dare,
Let them ride among you there,
Slash, and stab, and maim and hew;
What they like, that let them do.

advocating a reform in Parliament"). He at once wrote "The Masque of Anarchy," and sent it to Leigh Hunt, to be inserted in the *Examiner*, of which he was then Editor. It was not inserted, however, because Leigh Hunt thought "that the public at large had not become sufficiently discerning to do justice to the sincerity and kindheartedness of the spirit that walked in this flaming robe of verse."

"With folded arms and steady eyes,
And little fear, and less surprise,
Look upon them as they slay,
Till their rage has died away.

"Then they will return with shame
To the place from which they came;
And the blood thus shed will speak
In hot blushes on their cheek.

"Every woman in the land
Will point at them as they stand;
They will hardly dare to greet
Their acquaintance in the street.

"And the bold true warriors,
Who have hugged Danger in wars,
Will turn to those who would be free,
Ashamed of such base company.

"And that slaughter, to the Nation
Shall stream up like inspiration,
Eloquent, oracular;
A volcano heard afar.

"And these words shall then become
Like oppression's thundered doom,
Ringing thro' each heart and brain,
Heard again . . . again . . . again!

"Rise, like lions after slumber,
In unvanquishable number!
Shake your chains to earth like dew
Which in sleep has fallen on you.
Ye are many . . . they are few!"

49

Felicia Hemans

(1794–1835)

England's Dead

SON of the Ocean Isle!
Where sleep your mighty dead?
Show me what high and stately pile
Is reared o'er Glory's bed.

Go, stranger! track the deep—
Free, free the white sail spread!
Wave may not foam, nor wild wind sweep,
Where rest not England's dead.

On Egypt's burning plains,
By the pyramid o'erswayed,

It is strange that this poem, surely one of the finest Mrs. Hemans wrote, is so much less known than many of her others.

With fearful power the noonday reigns,
And the palm-trees yield no shade;

But let the angry sun
From heaven look fiercely red,
Unfelt by those whose task is done!—
There slumber England's dead.

The hurricane hath might
Along the Indian shore,
And far by Ganges' banks at night
Is heard the tiger's roar;—

But let the sound roll on!
It hath no tone of dread
For those that from their toils are gone,—
There slumber England's dead.

Loud rush the torrent-floods
The Western wilds among,
And free, in green Columbia's woods,
The hunter's bow is strung;—

But let the floods rush on!
Let the arrow's flight be sped!
Why should they reck whose task is done?—
There slumber England's dead.

ENGLAND'S DEAD

The mountain-storms rise high
In the snowy Pyrenees,
And toss the pine-boughs through the sky
Like rose-leaves on the breeze;—

But let the storm rage on!
Let the fresh wreaths be shed!
For the Roncesvalles' field is won,—
There slumber England's dead.

On the frozen deep's repose
'Tis a dark and dreadful hour,
When round the ship the ice-fields close,
And the northern night-clouds lour;—

But let the ice drift on!
Let the cold-blue desert spread!
Their course with mast and flag is done,—
Even there sleep England's dead.

The warlike of the isles,
The men of field and wave!
Are not the rocks their funeral piles,
The seas and shores their grave?

FELICIA HEMANS (1794–1835)

Go, stranger! track the deep—
 Free, free the white sail spread!
Wave may not foam, nor wild wind sweep,
 Where rest not England's dead.

50

The Homes of England

THE stately homes of England,
How beautiful they stand,
Amidst their tall ancestral trees,
O'er all the pleasant land!
The deer across their greensward bound
Through shade and sunny gleam,
And the swan glides past them with the sound
Of some rejoicing stream.

The merry homes of England—
Around their hearths by night,
What gladsome looks of household love
Meet in the ruddy light!
There woman's voice flows forth in song,
Or childhood's tale is told;
Or lips move tunefully along
Some glorious page of old.

A line from *Marmion* is sometimes given as a motto to this poem:—
"Where's the coward that would not dare to fight for such a land?"

FELICIA HEMANS (1794–1835)

The blessed homes of England,
How softly on their bowers
Is laid the holy quietness
That breathes from Sabbath hours!
Solemn, yet sweet, the church bells' chime
Floats through their woods at morn,
All other sounds in that still time
Of breeze and leaf are born.

The cottage homes of England
By thousands on her plains,
They are smiling o'er the silvery brooks,
And round the hamlet fanes.
Through glowing orchards forth they peep,
Each from its nook of leaves,
And fearless there the lowly sleep,
As the bird beneath their eaves.

The free fair homes of England,
Long, long, in hut and hall,
May hearts of native proof be reared
To guard each hallowed wall.
And green for ever be the groves,
And bright the flowery sod,
Where first the child's glad spirit loves
Its country and its God.

51

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY (LORD)

(1800–1859)

The Armada. A Fragment

ATTEND, all ye who list to hear our noble England's praise:
I tell of the thrice famous deeds she wrought in ancient days,
When that great fleet invincible against her bore in vain
The richest spoils of Mexico, the stoutest hearts of Spain.

The *Armada*, written in 1831, first appeared with *Ivry* in 1834, the year in which Macaulay sailed for India, as legal adviser to the Supreme Council of Calcutta.

It was about the lovely close of a warm summer day,
There came a gallant merchant-ship full sail to Plymouth Bay;
Her crew had seen Castile's black fleet, beyond Aurigny's isle,
At earliest twilight, on the waves lie heaving many a mile.
At sunrise she escaped their van, by God's especial grace;
And the tall *Pinta*, till the noon, had held her close in chase.
Forthwith a guard at every gun was placed along the wall;
The beacon blazed upon the roof of Edgecumbe's lofty hall;
Many a light fishing-bark put out to pry along the coast,
And with loose rein and bloody spur rode inland many a post.
With his white hair unbonneted, the stout old sheriff comes;
Behind him march the halberdiers; before him sound the drums;

His yeomen round the market cross make clear
an ample space;
For there behoves him to set up the standard
of Her Grace.
And haughtily the trumpets peal, and gaily dance
the bells,
As slow upon the labouring wind the royal blazon
swells.
Look how the Lion of the sea lifts up his an-
cient crown,
And underneath his deadly paw treads the gay
lilies down.
So stalked he when he turned to flight, on that
famed Picard field,
Bohemia's plume, and Genoa's bow, and Cæsar's
eagle shield.
So glared he when at Agincourt in wrath he
turned to bay,
And crushed and torn beneath his claws the
princely hunters lay.
Ho! strike the flagstaff deep, Sir Knight: ho!
scatter flowers, fair maids:
Ho! gunners, fire a loud salute: oh! gallants,
draw your blades.

Thou sun, shine on her joyously; ye breezes, waft her wide;
Our glorious SEMPER EADEM, the banner of our pride.
The freshening breeze of eve unfurled that banner's massy fold;
The parting gleam of sunshine kissed that haughty scroll of gold;
Night sank upon the dusky beach, and on the purple sea,
Such night in England ne'er had been, nor e'er again shall be.
From Eddystone to Berwick bounds, from Lynn to Milford Bay,
That time of slumber was as bright and busy as the day:
For swift to east and swift to west the ghastly war-flame spread,
High on St. Michael's Mount it shone: it shone on Beachy Head.
Far on the deep the Spaniard saw, along each southern shire,
Cape beyond cape, in endless range, those twinkling points of fire.

The fisher left his skiff to rock on Tamar's glittering waves:
The rugged miners poured to war from Mendip's sunless caves:
O'er Longleat's towers, o'er Cranbourne's oaks, the fiery herald flew:
He roused the shepherds of Stonehenge, the rangers of Beaulieu.
Right sharp and quick the bells all night rang out from Bristol town,
And ere the day three hundred horse had met on Clifton Down;
The sentinel on Whitehall gate looked forth into the night,
And saw o'erhanging Richmond Hill the streak of blood-red light.
Then bugle's note and cannon's roar the deathless silence broke,
And with one start, and with one cry, the royal city woke.
At once on all her stately gates arose the answering fires;
At once the wild alarum clashed from all her reeling spires;

From all the batteries of the Tower pealed loud
the voice of fear;
And all the thousand masts of Thames sent back
a louder cheer:
And from the furthest wards was heard the rush
of hurrying feet,
And the broad streams of pikes and flags rushed
down each roaring street;
And broader still became the blaze, and louder
still the din,
As fast from every village round the horse
came spurring in:
And eastward straight from wild Blackheath the
warlike errand went,
And roused in many an ancient hall the gallant
squires of Kent.
Southward from Surrey's pleasant hills flew
those bright couriers forth;
High on bleak Hampstead's swarthy moor they
started for the north;
And on, and on, without a pause, untired they
bounded still:
All night from tower to tower they sprang, they
sprang from hill to hill:

Till the proud peak unfurled the flag o'er Darwin's rocky dales,
Till like volcanoes flared to heaven the stormy hills of Wales,
Till twelve fair counties saw the blaze on Malvern's lonely height,
Till streamed in crimson on the wind the Wrekin's crest of light,
Till broad and fierce the star came forth on Ely's stately fane,
And tower and hamlet rose in arms o'er all the boundless plain;
Till Belvoir's lordly terraces the sign to Lincoln sent,
And Lincoln sped the message on o'er the wide vale of Trent;
Till Skiddaw saw the fire that burned on Gaunt's embattled pile,
And the red glare on Skiddaw roused the burghers of Carlisle.

52

A Jacobite's Epitaph

TO my true King I offered free from stain
Courage and faith; vain faith and courage vain.
For him, I threw lands, honours, wealth, away,
And one dear hope, that was more prized than they.
For him I languished in a foreign clime,
Grey-haired with sorrow in my manhood's prime;
Heard on Lavernia Scargill's whispering trees,
And pined by Arno for my lovelier Tees;
Beheld each night my home in fevered sleep,
Each morning started from the dream to weep;

For the second and last time we include what is more or less a "party" poem, and balance Milton's Sonnet to Cromwell with this most touching Epitaph. Macaulay's peculiar pity for an exiled Englishman is shown by the following extract from one of his letters written not long before leaving India:—"I have no words to tell you how I pine for England, or how intensely bitter exile has been to me, though I hope that I have borne it well. I feel as if I had no other wish than to see my country again and die."

A JACOBITE'S EPITAPH

Till God, who saw me tried too sorely, gave
The resting-place I asked—an early grave.
Oh thou, whom chance leads to this nameless stone,
From that proud country which was once mine own,
By those white cliffs I never more must see,
By that dear language which I speak like thee
Forget all feuds, and shed one English tear
O'er English dust. A broken heart lies here.

53

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

(1809–1861)

From "Aurora Leigh"

WHOEVER lives true life, will love true love.
I learnt to love that England. Very oft,
Before the day was born, or otherwise
Through secret windings of the afternoons,
I threw my hunters off and plunged myself
Among the deep hills, as a hunted stag
Will take the waters, shivering with the fear
And passion of the course. And when, at last

This description of English country is taken from the poem of which Landor said:—"I am half drunk with it . . . I had no idea that any one in this age was capable of so much poetry . . . there is the wild imagination of Shakspere." Barry Cornwall says, "*Aurora Leigh* is, a hundred times over, the best poem ever written by a woman."

Escaped,—so many a green slope built on slope
Betwixt me and the enemy's house behind,
I dared to rest, or wander,—like a rest
Made sweeter for the step upon the grass,—
And view the ground's most gentle dimplement,
(As if God's finger touched but did not press
In making England!) such an up and down
Of verdure,—nothing too much up or down,
A ripple of land; such little hills, the sky
Can stoop to tenderly and the wheatfields climb;
Such nooks of valleys, lined with orchises,
Fed full of noises by invisible streams;
And open pastures, where you scarcely tell
White daisies from white dew,—at intervals
The mythic oaks and elm-trees standing out
Self-poised upon their prodigy of shade;—
I thought my father's land was worthy too
Of being my Shakspeare's.

54

Francis Hastings Doyle (Sir)

(1810–1888)

The Private of the Buffs

LAST night, among his fellow roughs,
He jested, quaffed, and swore;
A drunken private of the Buffs
Who never looked before.
To-day, beneath the foeman's frown,
He stands in Elgin's place,
Ambassador from Britain's crown,
And type of all her race.

"Some Seiks, and a private of the Buffs, having remained behind with the grog-carts, fell into the hands of the Chinese. On the next morning they were brought before the authorities, and commanded to perform the *Koton*. The Seiks obeyed; but Moyse, the English soldier, declaring that he would not prostrate himself before any Chinaman alive, was immediately knocked upon the head, and

Poor, reckless, rude, low-born, untaught,
Bewildered, and alone,
A heart, with English instinct fraught,
He yet can call his own.
Ay, tear his body limb from limb,
Bring cord or axe or flame,
He only knows, that not through *him*
Shall England come to shame.

Far Kentish[1] hop-fields round him seem'd
Like dreams to come and go;
Bright leagues of cherry-blossom gleam'd
One sheet of living snow;
The smoke above his father's door
In gray soft eddyings hung:
Must he then watch it rise no more,
Doom'd by himself, so young?

Yes, honour calls!—with strength like steel
He put the vision by.

his body thrown on a dunghill." See China correspondent of the *Times*, quoted in the author's Note to "The Private of the Buffs," in *The Return of the Guards*. This and the following poem are included by permission of Messrs. Macmillan.

[1] The Buffs, or East Kent Regiment.

Let dusky Indians whine and kneel;
An English lad must die.
And thus, with eyes that would not shrink,
With knee to man unbent,
Unfaltering on its dreadful brink,
To his red grave he went.

Vain mightiest fleets, of iron framed;
Vain those all-shattering guns;
Unless proud England keep, untamed,
The strong heart of her sons.
So, let his name through Europe ring—
A man of mean estate,
Who died as firm as Sparta's king
Because his soul was great.

55

Balaclava

THIN glancing threads of English horse,
Why do your haughty trumpets wake?
Through yon grey myriads, massed in force,
None but the mad could hope to break!
"Men may be mad, or men be wise,
But not with us the question lies;
Although we guess not their intent,
This one thing well we know,
That, where the Light Brigade is sent,
The Light Brigade will go."
What need to tell
Of splintering shell,
Of cannon shot, and rifle-ball?
The death-hail smites them, one and all,
Through smoke that wraps them like a pall,
As raindrops, each on each they fall.

It is interesting to compare this poem with Mr. Dobell's sonnet on the same subject, No. 64.

Horse rolls o'er horse,
Corse hideth corse,
The gaps grow wider and wider,
Deep wounded men
Crawl back agen;
Steeds rush without a rider:
But still against the wondering foe,
In stubborn silence forward go
Unchecked, unslackening, undismayed,
The living of the Light Brigade,
Till that wild onset overbears
The guns in front, one moment theirs.
Sudden and sharp the halt is made,
They seem, in mute reproach, to say,
"Your orders have been now obeyed,
As far as in us lay;
Yours are these guns, with life blood red,
But can ye hold them by the dead?"
Meanwhile the cannon, from each hill,
Keep showering slaughter on them still,
All paths with dead are lined;
Dense columns bar their onward course,
And long blue streaks of Russian horse,
Like nets are spread behind.
That shattered remnant pauses there,

Blown chargers, wounded men:
Oh! they will break, like yielding air,
And who shall blame them then?
Not so—through that bewildered throng
Like fire the leaders glance along
From rank to rank; too far to hear,
We seem to feel an English cheer;
Whilst Fancy, from each blade waved high,
Each gesture fierce, and flashing eye,
Can proud words, such as these, supply:—
"Gather ye, gather ye, close up once more!
Swords red to the wristband, hearts steel to the core,
Lance, sabre, and carbine, dragoon and Cossack,
Are strong to the sight, but they dare not attack;
No cutting, give point, were they twenty to one,
Men who wait to be charged, when we gallop, will run!"
They gather, they gather, they close up once more,
Swords red to the wristband, hearts steel to the core,
Though wide wounds may weaken, though horses may blow,
They have pace enough left for a dash at the foe;
Then as hawks might swoop down through the toils of a spider,

Right at the blue line goes each horse and his rider.
It is rent like a rag, burst like bubbles asunder,
Whilst down from each height roars redoubled the thunder;
Still unstayed and unbroken, they cut their way through
Past spears that outflank them, from swords that pursue.
With cannon and riflemen hot on their track,
Destroyed, but unconquered, we welcome them back:
Not a man in that death-charge his chief hath forsaken,
And the guns which ye flung them at—were they not taken?

And though, beneath yon fatal hill,
Their dead the valley strew,
Grimly, with cold hands, clutching still
The broken swords they drew,
We will not call their lives ill spent,
If, to all time, they show,
That where the Light Brigade was sent,
The Light Brigade would go.

56

Robert Browning

(1812–1889)

Home-Thoughts, from Abroad

I

OH, to be in England
Now that April's there,
And whoever wakes in England
Sees, some morning, unaware,
That the lowest boughs and the brushwood sheaf
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough
In England—now!

Mrs. Sutherland Orr classifies this among Browning's descriptive poems with "De Gustibus" and "The Englishman in Italy." Like the three following poems, it is included with the sanction of the owner of the copyrights.

II

And after April, when May follows,
And the whitethroat builds, and all the swallows—
Hark! where my blossomed pear-tree in the hedge
Leans to the field and scatters on the clover
Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent spray's edge—
That's the wise thrush; he sings each song twice over,
Lest you should think he never could recapture
The first fine careless rapture!
And though the fields look rough with hoary dew,
All will be gay when noontide wakes anew
The buttercups, the little children's dower,
—Far brighter than this gaudy melon-flower!

57

Home-Thoughts, from the Sea

NOBLY, nobly Cape Saint Vincent to the north-west died away;
Sunset ran, one glorious blood-red, reeking into Cadiz Bay;
Bluish mid the burning water, full in face Trafalgar lay;
In the dimmest north-east distance, dawned Gibraltar, grand and gray;
"Here and here did England help me,—how can I help England?"—say,
Whoso turns as I, this evening, turn to God to praise and pray,
While Jove's planet rises yonder, silent over Africa.

"An utterance of patriotic pride and gratitude, aroused in the mind of an Englishman, by the sudden appearance of Trafalgar in the blood-red glow of the southern setting sun." —Mrs. Sutherland Orr, *Handbook to the Works of Robert Browning.*

58

From "Charles Avison"

BANG the drums,
Blow the trumps, Avison! March-motive? that's
Truth which endures resetting. Sharps and flats,
Lavish at need, shall dance athwart thy score
When ophicleide and bombardon's uproar
Mate the approaching trample, even now,
Big in the distance—or my ears deceive—
Of federated England, fitly weave
March-music for the future!

Parleyings with Certain People of Importance in their Day—the book of which "Charles Avison" is part—is not a dramatic poem, but, as Mr. William Sharp points out in his *Life of Robert Browning*, is a poem of illuminative insight guided by dramatic imagination.

59

Arthur Hugh Clough

(1819–1861)

Green Fields of England

GREEN fields of England! wheresoe'er
Across this watery waste we fare,
One image at our hearts we bear,
Green fields of England, everywhere.

From *Songs in Absence*, 1852. The poem, included by permission of Messrs. Macmillan, was composed either during the writer's voyage across the Atlantic, or during his stay in America. Quoting the first verse, in a sermon in *Creed and Character*, Canon Scott Holland says:—"An English home—the very thought of it is a benediction. Nothing else can ever win from us the look that comes up into our eyes as we stand in strange lands and drink in news from home—as we stand and think of quiet farms that grow old amid the English uplands—of new-mown hay that lies sweet in river-meadows—of the piping of the blackbird and the thrush over dewy English lawns. . . . Yes, wherever we English scatter, we carry the same associations with us; a life is in us, which is one and the same in all."

Sweet eyes in England, I must flee
Past where the waves' last confines be,
Ere your loved smile I cease to see,
Sweet eyes in England, dear to me.

Dear home in England, safe and fast
If but in thee my lot lie cast,
The past shall seem a nothing past
To thee, dear home, if won at last;
Dear home in England, won at last.

HENRY YULE (SIR)

(1820–1889)

The Birkenhead

AMID the loud ebriety of War,
With shouts of "La République" and
"La Gloire,"
The Vengeur's crew, 'twas said, with flying flag
And broadside blazing level with the wave
Went down erect, defiant to their grave
Beneath the sea. 'Twas but a Frenchman's brag,

Major-General F. Maurice, in an article on *The Loss of the Birkenhead* in the *Cornhill Magazine* for February, 1897, says,—"The record of the doings of Britons at the time of that wreck has stirred blood other than British. We have learnt of late years to look upon Prussia as the nucleus of the proudest military monarchy in Europe, and on the discipline of Prussian soldiers as the rock on which the grandeur and unity of Germany have been built. Yet in 1852, the lesson in discipline which had been taught the world by Britons on February 26th seemed to the King of

Yet Europe rang with it for many a year.
Now we recount no fable; Europe, hear!
And when they tell thee "England is a fen
Corrupt, a kingdom tottering to decay,
Her nerveless burghers lying an easy prey
For the first comer," tell how the other day
A crew of half a thousand Englishmen
Went down into the deep in Simon's Bay!

Not with the cheer of battle in the throat,
Or cannon-glare and din to stir their blood,
But, roused from dreams of home to find their boat
Fast sinking, mustered on the deck they stood,
Biding God's pleasure, and their chief's command.
Calm was the sea, but not less calm that band
Close ranged upon the poop, with bated breath
But flinching not though eye to eye with Death!

Prussia so precious that he ordered the record of it to be read out at the head of every regiment in his service. It may be doubted if in the history of the world the like compliment has been ever paid by the monarch of one proud race to the martial qualities and training of another." This poem appeared in the *Edinboro' Courant* in 1852. The subject has also been treated by Sir Francis Doyle.

THE BIRKENHEAD

Heroes! Who were those heroes? Veterans steeled
To face the King of Terrors mid the scaith
Of many a hurricane and trenched field?
Far other: weavers from the stocking-frame;
Boys from the plough; cornet with beardless chin,
But steeled in honour and in discipline!

Weep, Britain, for the Cape whose ill-starred name,
Long since divorced from Hope suggests but shame,
Disaster, and thy captains held at bay
By naked hordes; but as thou weepest, thank
Heaven for those undegenerate sons who sank
Aboard the Birkenhead in Simon's Bay!

61

SIDNEY DOBELL

(1824-1874)

From "Balder" (*see* 62)

"HOW many?" said our good Captain.
"Twenty sail and more."
We were homeward bound,
Scudding in a gale with our jib towards the Nore.
Right athwart our tack,
The foe came thick and black,
Like Hell-birds and foul weather—you might count them by the score.

The Betsy Jane did slack
To see the game in view.
They knew the Union Jack,
And the tyrant's flag we knew!
Our Captain shouted "Clear the decks!" and the Bo'sun's whistle blew.

Then our gallant Captain,
With his hand he seized the wheel,
And pointed with his stump to the middle of the foe.
"Hurrah, lads, in we go!"
(You should hear the British cheer,
Fore and aft.)

"There are twenty sail," sang he,
"But little Betsy Jane bobs to nothing on the sea!"
(You should hear the British cheer
Fore and aft.)

"See yon ugly craft
With the pennon at her main!
Hurrah, my merry boys,
There goes the Betsy Jane!"
(You should hear the British cheer,
Fore and aft.)

The foe, he beats to quarters, and the Russian bugles sound;
And the little Betsy Jane she leaps upon the sea.

SIDNEY DOBELL (1824–1874)

"Port and starboard!" cried our Captain;
"Pay it in, my hearts!" sang he
"We're old England's sons,
And we'll fight for her to-day!"
(You should hear the British cheer,
Fore and aft.)
"Fire away!"
In she runs,
And her guns
Thunder round.

62

Sailors' Song. (From "Balder," *see* 61)

THIS dear English land!
This happy England, loud with brooks and birds,
Shining with harvests, cool with dewy trees,
And bloomed from hill to dell; but whose best flowers

Charlotte Brontë, in a letter to Mr. Dobell, says of "Balder,"—"Remembering well his elder brother—the potent 'Roman,'—it was natural to give a cordial welcome to a fresh scion of the same house and race. . . . He teems with power. I found in him even a wild breath of life; but I thought this favourite and favoured child would bring his sire trouble, would make his heart ache. It seemed to me that his strength and beauty were not so much those of Joseph—the pillar of Jacob's age—as of the Prodigal Son who troubled his father, though he always kept his love." The recognition given to "Balder" was indeed very different from the enthusiastic one accorded to "The Roman," but the two extracts given here are enough by themselves to justify Mr. Dobell's deliberate judgment that there was as much poetry in many a chapter of "Balder" as in the whole of his earlier poem.

Are daughters, and Ophelia still more fair
Than any rose she weaves; whose noblest floods
The pulsing torrent of a nation's heart;
Whose forests stronger than her native oaks
Are living men; and whose unfathomed lakes
For ever calm the unforgotten dead
In quiet graveyards willowed seemly round,
O'er which To-day bends sad, and sees his face.

63

England's Day

RUSSIAN, Yankee, and Prussian,
Wherever you be,
That stand by the shores of our sea
And shake your fists over,
This is the Castle of Dover,
You knaves!
And yon's the flag unfurled,
That shall flog you over the waves
Of the world.
Ay, by the shores of our sea,
You knaves!
For wherever the breeze flows free,
And the hurling, swirling, up and down deeps
go thundering under and over,

Mrs. Dobell tells us she is particularly glad this is one of the poems selected, and adds, "I remember the author was very ill at the time he wrote it, but stirred to the depths by indignation. It was at the time of Alabama claims, and the other great Powers were in a very threatening attitude."

There the sea is our sea,
And there's a Castle of Dover,
Which carries a flag unfurl'd
That shall flog you off the waves
Of the world.
What are you trying to say,
You knaves?
Whatever it be, it so maddens the waves
That not a word comes this way.
Speak up! you've no need to be shy,
This is the land of charity,
Where we never regret the labours
We spend for the sake of our neighbours;
So no more thrimming and thrumming,
But mention whatever you want;
And if you can show us 'tis good for you,
We're just the People to grant.
Should you like, for instance, a drubbing or two?
We'll take neither fees nor thanks,
But do you the very best we can do:
Ay! and do it aboard your own planks,
And ask you nothing for coming!
Louder, my boy, ahoy!
Why what the fiends can you say

That makes such mountainous weather?
You look to be talking loud,
But I hear you no more than I see a feather
That a cyclone spouts to a cloud.
If you've got any breath, don't save it.
Well done! once more! I have it—
"England"—that's good for one's ears—
"England"—all right! and three cheers—
But unless that voice of your own
Can hoist up higher, I'm blest
If I'll catch a word of the rest!
For you no sooner open your jaws
Than there roars such a vast sea-shout
That I hear you no more than I'd hear the daws
If Dover cliffs tumbled down.
Now then, there's a lull, sing out!
Yo hoy! that's better. Soho!
I've got it! "England"—Yes—No—
"Has had her day." Oh, that's your say—
"England has had her day!"
O ye who bear, on every sea,
That flag of flags, so often sung,
Whose name, in every human tongue,
Is t'other word for Victory,
That banner of eternal youth

Your sires and grandsires, great and good,
Have colour'd with their mortal blood
And cross'd with their immortal truth,
A cheer, a cheer, and you shall hear
News that's worth a British cheer.
Do you see yon braggarts three,
Like three swashbucklers in a play?
They've found it out for you and me,
So 'twon't be civil to say nay.
And verse one of chapter A
In this great discovery
Is "England"—what? ay, wait for that
And while you wait, my hearts, haul down
Your wind-blown pageant of renown,—
Yon glorious weed whose bayonets
The grasping tyrant ne'er forgets,—
Yon harp whose throbbing chords can beat
All sounds of battle but retreat,—
And let the keeper's hand lay low
The lions that ne'er fell to foe;—
Reef, reef the flapping toy away,
England, my hearts,—has had her day!
Now, true blues, you've heard the news,
Hip hip hip, hurrah?
Not hip hip hip, hurrah, my boys,

But hip hip hip, aha!
From decks to shrouds, from shrouds to clouds,
Hip hip hip, aha!
The stays are taut, the sails are caught,
With ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!
Like woods at play, the big masts sway,
With ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!
The big ships ride from side to side,
With ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!
The north waves roll from pole to pole,
Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!
From pole to pole the south winds troll,
Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!
From air to sea, from sea to air,
The cross-clang clamours everywhere,
Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!
From Baffin Bay, by Matapan,
Round Hindostan, and far Japan,
Back, back, to where it first began,
Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!
Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, my boys.
Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!
The very globe shakes like a man,
With ha, ha, ha, ha!
Russians, Yankees, Prussians, all you

Who stand there scowling at Dover,
"England has had her day"—is that your cry?
Flood and earthquake! it's our cry too!
Had it, had it, a thousand times over!
Yea, and as sure as sky is sky,
And sea is sea, and shore is shore,
You shall see England have one day more!
And such a day shall England have,
That a thousand cities over the wave
Shall wring their bitter hands and say,
"England, England, has had her day!"
Some of us, when that day is done,
You knaves!
Shall go down with the battle sun
In the battle waves.
But as day by day
The sun goes round
Where'er yon flag's unfurled,
And still through dews of morn
Comes back to find Britannia crown'd
And tell her of her world,
So sure with morrow
At sweet sunrise,
Like mourn of horn,
Like roll of drum,

Like boom of gun,
Like swell of bells,
Our name and our fame
Thro' England's tears shall come
Up the skies!
And, putting by the shades
From early window-pane
Of castled palace or white-cottaged lane,
Pass without rebuke,
And look
On what the sun sees:
Little children on their knees,
And pale dishevelled maids,
And ancient sires whose sorrow is not sorrow,
And mother sitting by the bed,
Where, years ago, was born
The face she shall not see again,
Who bows the passionate winter of the head
And sobs Amen.
And some of us shall come
In triumph home
Beneath yon flag unfurl'd!
Over the foam, over the foam,
Conquerors, conquerors, conquerors home,
Joyously sailing the lightsomest foam

That the gayest of gales ever curl'd.
On, on, over ocean and ocean,
To the goal of the patriot's devotion,
Once more, with heaving heart, to see
The native-land of all the free,
The mother-earth of Liberty,
The sacred soil that bears the tree
That sowed the world.
On, on, over ocean and ocean,
On, on, by shores that gaze and wonder,
Shores where friendly cities shout,
Shores where frantic foes blaze out
Their passing wrath in vain.
On, on, like gods on living thrones of thunder,
Heclas and Ætnas smoking thro' the main;
On, on, like kings and kings,
In wingèd towns and tow'rs with wings;
On, on, town after town,
And, in their train,
Up ocean hill and down hollow,
Horn'd Leviathans that mount and wallow,
And all
The jubilant Elephant-herd of the sea,
That roar and roll and follow
Where the sea-shepherds call.

But some of those who come
In glory home
That day
Shall envy us who sleep
In the Deep,
Far away!
When they see the eyes that weep,
When they hear the lips that pray,
Because we sleep
Far away!
Millions and millions of eyes that weep,
Millions of lips that cry
To God that day,
Because we sleep
Far away!—
Thousands and thousands of eyes that are dry
As they never were dry till that day,
Because we sleep
Far away!—
Thousands of lips that shall keep
Silence to God and Man that day,—
Silence, silence, deep,—
Deep, deep as the Deep
Where we sleep
Far away!

64

Cavalry Charge at Balaclava

TRAVELLER on foreign ground whoe'er thou art,
Tell the great tidings! They went down that day
A Legion, and came back from victory
Two hundred men and Glory! On the mart
Is this "*to lose?*" Yet, Stranger, thou shalt say
These were our common Britons. 'Tis our way
In England. Aye, ye heavens! I saw them part
The Death-Sea as an English dog leaps o'er
The rocks into the ocean. He goes in
Thick as a lion, and he comes out thin
As a starved wolf; but lo! he brings to shore
A life above his own, which when his heart
Bursts with that final effort, from the stones
Springs up and builds a temple o'er his bones.

This sonnet was written, Mrs. Dobell remembers, upon the news reaching her husband of the glorious action which it describes.

65

John Bohun Martin
(Captain of "The London")

KEEPING his word, the promised Roman kept
Enough of worded breath to live till now.
Our Regulus was free of plighted vow
Or tacit debt: skies fell, seas leapt, storms swept;
Death yawned: with a mere step he might have stept
To life. But the House-Master would know how
To do the master's honours; and did know;
And did them to the hour of rest, and slept
The last of all his house. Oh, thou heart's-core
Of Truth, how will the nations sentence thee?

Mrs. Dobell says she might say the same regarding this sonnet as of the preceding one. "Nothing," she adds, "stirred the poet's nature like heroism."

Hark! as loud Europe cries "Could man do more?"
Great England lifts her head from her distress,
And answers "But could Englishman do less?"
Oh England! goddess of the years to be!

FLORENCE, *February*, 1866.

66

Francis Turner Palgrave

Crecy
August 26, 1346

AT Crecy by Somme in Ponthieu
High up on a windy hill
A mill stands out like a tower;
King Edward stands on the mill.
The plain is seething below
As Vesuvius seethes with flame,
But O! not with fire, but gore,
Earth incarnadined o'er,
Crimson with shame and with fame!—
To the King run the messengers, crying,
"Thy Son is hard-press'd to the dying!"

"The feudal idea of an army, resting on the superiority of the horseman to the footman (Green), of the mounted noble to the unmounted churl, may be said to have been ruined by this battle." From Mr. Palgrave's Notes to his *Visions of England* (Cassell's edition).

"Let alone: for to-day will be written in story
To the great world's end, and for ever!
So, let the boy have the glory."

Erin and Gwalia there
With England are one against France;
Outfacing the oriflamme red
The red dragons of Merlin advance:—
As harvest in autumn renew'd
The lances bend o'er the fields;
Snow-thick our arrow-heads white
Level the foe as they light;
Knighthood to yeomanry yields:—
Proud heart, the King watches, as higher
Goes the blaze of the battle, and nigher:—
"To-day is a day will be written in story
To the great world's end, and for ever!
Let the boy alone have the glory."

Harold at Senlac-on-Sea
By Norman arrow laid low,—
When the shield-wall was breach'd by the shaft,
—Thou art avenged by the bow!
Chivalry! name of romance!

Thou art henceforth but a name!
Weapon that none can withstand,
Yew in the Englishman's hand,
Flight-shaft unerring in aim!
As a lightning-struck forest the foemen
Shiver down to the stroke of the bowmen:—
—"O to-day is a day will be written in story
To the great world's end, and for ever!
So, let the boy have the glory."

Pride of Liguria's shore
Genoa wrestles in vain;
Vainly Bohemia's King
Kinglike is laid with the slain.
The Blood-lake is wiped-out in blood,
The shame of the centuries o'er;
Where the pride of the Norman had sway
The lions lord over the fray,
The legions of France are no more:—
—The Prince to his father kneels lowly;
—"His is the battle! his wholly!
For to-day is a day will be written in story
To the great world's end, and for ever!
So, let him have the spurs, and the glory!"

67

London Bridge
July 6, 1535

THE midnight moaning stream
Draws down its glassy surface through the bridge
That o'er the current casts a tower'd ridge,
Dark sky-line forms fantastic as a dream;
And cresset watch-lights on the bridge-gate gleam,
Where 'neath the star-lit dome gaunt masts upbuoy

Included in accordance with Mr. Palgrave's suggestion, "that one poem might very well express *silent and submissive* heroism: often as noble and impressive as the active class." He suggests also the addition of the following Note from *Grocyn at Oxford*: "If, looking at England, one point may be singled out in that long movement, generalized under the name of the Renaissance, as critical, it is the introduction of the Greek and Latin literature:—which has remained ever since conspicuously the most powerful and enlarging element, the most effectively educational, among all branches of human study."

No flag of festive joy,
But blanching spectral heads;—their heads, who
died
Victims to tyrant-pride,
Martyrs of Faith and Freedom in the day
Of shame and flame and brutal selfish sway.

And one in black array
Veiling her Rizpah-misery, to the gate
Comes, and with gold and moving speech sedate
Buys down the thing aloft, and bears away
Snatch'd from the withering wind and raven's
prey:
And as a mother's eyes, joy soften'd, shed
Tears o'er her young child's head,
Golden and sweet, from evil saved; so she
O'er this, sad-smilingly,
Mangled and gray, unwarm'd by human breath,
Clasping death's relic with love passing death.
So clasping now! and so
When death clasps her in turn! e'en in the
grave
Nursing the precious head she could not save
Tho' through each drop her life-blood yearn'd to
flow

If but for him she might to scaffold go :—
And O! as from that Hall, with innocent gore
Sacred from roof to floor,
To that grim other place of blood he went—
What cry of agony rent
The twilight—cry as of angel's pain,—
My father, O my father! . . . and in vain!

Then, as on those who lie
Cast out from bliss, the days of joy come back,
And all the soul with wormwood sweetness rack,
So in that trance of dreadful ecstasy
The vision of her girlhood glinted by :—
And how the father through their garden stray'd,
And, child with children, play'd,
And teased the rabbit-hutch, and fed the dove
Before him from above
Alighting,—in his visitation sweet,
Led on by little hands and eager feet.

Hence among those he stands,
Elect ones, ever in those ears the word
He that offends these little ones . . . is heard;
With love and kisses smiling-out commands,

And all the tender hearts within his hands;
Seeing, in every child that goes, a flower
From Eden's nursery bower,
A little stray from Heaven, for reverence here
Sent down, and comfort dear:
All care well paid-for by one pure caress,
And life made happy in their happiness.

He too, in deeper lore
Than woman's in those early days, or yet—
Train'd step by step his youthful Margaret;
The wonders of that amaranthine store
Which Hellas and Hesperia evermore
Lavish, to strengthen and refine the race:—
For, in his large embrace,
The light of faith with that new light combined
To purify the mind:—
A crystal soul, a heart without disguise,
All wisdom's lover, and through love, all-wise.

—O face she ne'er will see,—
Gray eyes, and careless hair, and mobile lips
From which the shaft of kindly satire slips
Healing its wound with human sympathy;
The heart-deep smile; the tear-concealing glee!

O well-known furrows of the reverend brow!
Familiar voice, that now
She will not hear nor answer any more,—
Till on the better shore
Where love completes the love in life begun,
And smooths and knits our ravell'd skein in one!

Blest soul, who through life's course
Didst keep the young child's heart unstain'd and whole,
To find again the cradle at the goal,
Like some fair stream returning to its source;—
Ill fall'n on days of falsehood, greed, and force!
Base days, that win the plaudits of the base,
Writ to their own disgrace,
With casuist sneer o'erglossing works of blood,
Miscalling evil, good;
Before some despot-hero falsely named
Grovelling in shameful worship unashamed.

—But they of the great race
Look equably, not caring much, on foe
And fame and misesteem of man below;
And with forgiving radiance on their face,

And eyes that aim beyond the bourn of pace
Seeing the invisible, glory-clad, go up
And drink the absinthine cup,
Fill'd nectar-deep by the dear love of Him
Slain at Jerusalem
To free them from a tyrant worse than this,
Changing brief anguish for the heart of bliss.

ENVOY.

—O moaning stream of Time,
Heavy with hate and sin and wrong and woe
As ocean-ward dost go,
Thou also hast thy treasures!—Life, sublime
In its own sweet simplicity:—life for love:
Heroic martyr-death:—
Man sees them not: but they are seen above.

68

Sidney at Zutphen
October 2, 1586

1.

WHERE Guelderland outspreads
Her green wide water-meads
Laced by the silver of the parted Rhine;
Where round the horizon low
The waving millsaïls go,
And poplar avenues stretch their pillar'd line;
That morn a clinging mist uncurl'd
Its folds o'er South-Fen town, and blotted out
the world.

2.

There, as the gray dawn broke,
Cloked by that ghost-white cloke,
The fifty knights of England sat in steel;

It is Mr. Palgrave's hope that these lines on Sir Philip Sidney, at least in their intention, may be held a little tribute to that hero.

Each man all ear, for eye
Could not his nearest spy;
And in the mirk's dim hiding heart they feel,
—Feel more than hear,—the signal sound
Of tramp and hoof and wheel, and guns that bruise the ground.

3.

—Sudden, the mist gathers up like a curtain, the theatre clear;
Stage of unequal conflict, and triumph purchased too dear!
Half our best treasures of gallanthood there, with axe and with glaive,
There, Spain and her thousands nearing, with levin-tongued weapons of war;—
Ebro's swarthy sons, and the bands from Epirus afar;
Crescia, Gonzaga, del Vasto,—world-famous names of affright,
Veterans of iron and blood, unremorseful engines of fight:—
But ours were Norris and Essex and Stanley and Willoughby grim,

And the waning Dudley star, and the star that will never be dim,
Star of Philip the peerless,—and now at height of his noon,
Astrophel!—not for thyself but for England extinguish'd too soon!

4.

Red walls of Zutphen behind; before them, Spain in her might:—
O! 'tis not war, but a game of heroic boyish delight!
For on, like a bolt-head of steel, go the fifty, dividing their way,
Through and over the brown mail-shirts,—Farnese's choicest array;
Over and through, and the curtel-arc flashes, the plumes in their pride
Sink like the larch to the hewer, a death-mown avenue wide:
While the foe in his stubbornness flanks them and bars them, with merciless aim
Shooting from musket and saker a scornful death-tongue of flame.

As in an Autumn afar, the Six Hundred in Chersonese hew'd
Their road through a host, for their England, and honour's sake wasting their blood,
Foolishness wiser than wisdom!—So these, since Agincourt morn,
First showing the world the calm open-eyed rashness of Englishmen born!

5.

Foes ere the cloud went up, black Norris and Stanley in one
Pledge iron hands and kiss swords, each his mate's, in the face of the sun,
Warm with the generous wine of the battle; and Willoughby's might
To the turf bore Crescia, and lifted again,—knight honouring knight;
All in the hurry and turmoil:—where North, half-booted and rough,
Launch'd on the struggle, and Sidney struck onward, his cuisses thrown off,
Rash over-courage of poet and youth!—while the memories, how

At the joust long syne She look'd on, as he triumphed, were hot on his brow,
"Stella! mine own, my own star!"—and he sigh'd:—and towards him a flame
Shot its red signal; a shriek!—and the viewless messenger came;
Found the unguarded gap, the approach left bare to the prey,
Where through the limb to the life the death-stroke shatter'd a way.

6.

—Astrophel! England's pride!
O stroke that, when he died,
Smote through the realm,—our best, our fairest ta'en!
For now the wound accurst
Lights up death's fury-thirst;—
Yet the allaying cup, in all that pain,
Untouched, untasted he gives o'er
To one who lay, and watch'd with eyes that craved it more:—

"Take it," he said, "'tis thine;
"Thy need is more than mine;"—
And smiled as one who looks through death to life:
—Then pass'd, true heart and brave,
Leal from birth to grave:—
For that curse-laden roar of mortal strife,
With God's own peace ineffable fill'd,—
In that eternal Love all earthly passion still'd.

69

Elizabeth at Tilbury
September, 1588

LET them come, come never so proudly,
O'er the green waves as giants ride,
Silver clarions menacing loudly,
"All the Spains" on their banners wide;
High on deck of the gilded galleys
Our light sailors they scorn below:—
We will scatter them, plague, and shatter them,
Till their flag hauls down to their foe!
For our oath we swear
By the name we bear,
By England's Queen, and England free and fair,—
Hers ever and hers still, come life, come death!
God save Elizabeth!

Sidonia, Recalde, and Leyva
Watch from their Castles in swarthy scorn,

Lords and Princes by Philip's favour;
We by birthright are nobly born!
Freemen born of the blood of freemen,
Sons of Creçy and Flodden are we!
We shall sunder them, fire, and plunder them,—
English boats on an English sea
And our oath we swear,
By the name we bear,
By England's Queen, and England free and fair,—
Hers ever and hers still, come life, come death!
God save Elizabeth!

Drake and Frobisher, Hawkins and Howard,
Raleigh, Cavendish, Cecil, and Brooke,
Hang like wasps by the flagships tower'd,
Sting their way through the thrice-piled oak:—
Let them range their seven-mile crescent,
Giant galleons, canvas wide!
Ours will harry them, board, and carry them,
Plucking the plumes of the Spanish pride.
For our oath we swear,
By the name we bear,

By England's Queen, and England free and fair,—
Hers ever and hers still, come life, come death!
God save Elizabeth!

—Hath God risen in wrath and scatter'd?
Have His tempests smote them in scorn?
Past the Orcades, dumb and tatter'd,
'Mong sea-beasts do they drift forlorn?
We were as lions hungry for battle;
God has made our battle His own!
God has scatter'd them, sunk, and shattered them:
Give the glory to Him alone!
While our oath we swear,
By the name we bear,
By England's Queen, and England free and fair,—
Hers ever and hers still, come life, come death!
God save Elizabeth!

70

Trafalgar

October 21, 1805

HEARD ye the thunder of battle
Low in the South and afar?
Saw ye the flush of the death-cloud
Crimson o'er Trafalgar?
Such another day never
England will look on again,
When the battle fought was the hottest,
And the hero of heroes was slain!
For the fleet of France and the force of Spain were gather'd for fight,
A greater than Philip their lord, a new Armada in might:—
And the sails were aloft once more in the deep Gaditanian bay,
Where *Redoubtable* and *Bucentaure* and great *Trinidada* lay:

Eager-reluctant to close; for across the blood-
shed to be
Two navies beheld one prize in its glory,—the
throne of the sea!
Which were bravest, who should tell? for both
were gallant and true;
But the greatest seaman was ours, of all that
sail'd o'er the blue.

From Cadiz the enemy sallied: they knew not
Nelson was there;
His name a navy to us, but to them a flag of
despair.
'Twixt Algeziras and Aqamonte he guarded the
coast,
'Till he bore from Tavira south; and they now
must fight, or be lost;—
Vainly they steer'd for the Rock and the Mid-
land sheltering sea,
For he headed the Admirals round, constraining
them under his lee,
Villeneuve of France, and Gravina of Spain: so
they shifted their ground,
They could choose,—they were more than we;
—and they faced at Trafalgar round;

Rampart-like ranged in line, a sea-fortress angrily
tower'd !
In the midst, four-storied with guns, the dark
Trinidada lower'd.

So with those.—But meanwhile, as against
some dyke that men massively rear,
From on high the torrent surges, to drive
through the dyke as a spear,
Eagle-eyed e'en in his blindness, our chief sets
his double array,
Making the fleet two spears, to thrust at the foe
any way, . . .
"Anyhow!—without orders, each captain his
Frenchman may grapple perforce :
Collingwood first" (yet the *Victory* ne'er a whit
slacken'd her course)
"Signal for action ! Farewell ! we shall win, but
we meet not again !"
—Then a low thunder of readiness ran from the
decks o'er the main,
And on,—as the message from masthead to
masthead flew out like a flame,
ENGLAND EXPECTS EVERY MAN WILL DO HIS
DUTY,—they came.

—Silent they come :—While the thirty black forts
of the foeman's array
Clothe them in billowy snow, tier speaking o'er
tier as they lay ;
Flashes that thrust and drew in, as swords when
the battle is rife ;—
But ours stood frowningly smiling, and ready for
death as for life.
—O in that interval grim, ere the furies of
slaughter embrace,
Thrills o'er each man some far echo of England ;
some glance of some face !
—Faces gazing seaward through tears from the
ocean-girt shore ;
Faces that ne'er can be gazed on again till the
death-pang is o'er . . .
Lone in his cabin the Admiral kneeling, and all
his great heart
As a child's to the mother, goes forth to the
loved one, who bade him depart
. . . O not for death, but glory ! her smile
would welcome him home !
—Louder and thicker the thunderbolts fall :—
and silent they come.

As when beyond Dongola the lion, whom hunters attack,
Plagued by their darts from afar, leaps in, dividing them back;
So between Spaniard and Frenchman the *Victory* wedged with a shout,
Gun against gun; a cloud from her decks and lightning went out;
Iron hailing of pitiless death from the sulphury smoke;
Voices hoarse and parch'd, and blood from invisible stroke.
Each man stood to his work, though his mates fell smitten around,
As an oak of the wood, while his fellow, flame-shatter'd, besplinters the ground:—
Gluttons of danger for England, but sparing the foe as he lay;
For the spirit of Nelson was on them, and each was Nelson that day.

"She has struck!"—he shouted—"She burns, the *Redoubtable*! Save whom we can,
Silence our guns:"—for in him the woman was great in the man,

In that heroic heart each drop girl-gentle and pure,
Dying by those he spared;—and now Death's triumph was sure!
From the deck the smoke-wreath clear'd, and the foe set his rifle in rest,
Dastardly aiming, where Nelson stood forth, with the stars on his breast,—
"In honour I gain'd them, in honour I die with them!" . . .
Then, in his place,
Fell . . . "Hardy! 'tis over; but let them not know": and he cover'd his face.
Silent, the whole fleet's darling they bore to the twilight below:
And above the war-thunder came shouting, as foe struck his flag after foe.

To his heart death rose: and for Hardy, the faithful, he cried in his pain,—
"How goes the day with us, Hardy?" . . . "Tis ours":—
Then he knew, not in vain
Not in vain for his comrades and England he bled: how he left her secure,

Queen of her own blue seas, while his name and
example endure.
O like a lover he loved her! for her as water he
pours
Life-blood and life and love, lavish'd all for her
sake, and for ours!
—"Kiss me, Hardy!—Thank God!—I have done
my duty!"—And then
Fled that heroic soul, and left not his like
among men.

Hear ye the heart of a nation
Groan, for her saviour is gone;
Gallant and true and tender,
Child and chieftain in one?
Such another day never
England will weep for again,
When the triumph darken'd the triumph,
And the hero of heroes was slain.

71

GERALD MASSEY

Old England

THERE she sits in her Island-home,
Peerless among her Peers!
And Liberty oft to her arms doth come,
To ease its poor heart of tears.
Old England still throbs with the muffled fire
Of a Past she can never forget:
And again shall she herald the World up higher;
For there's life in the Old Land yet.

They would mock at her now, who of old looked forth
In their fear, as they heard her afar;
But loud will your wail be, O Kings of the Earth!
When the Old Land goes down to the war.

This and the succeeding poems of Mr. Massey's are taken from *My Lyrical Life.*

The Avalanche trembles, half-launched, and half-riven,
Her voice will in motion set:
O ring out the tidings, wide-reaching as Heaven!
There's life in the Old Land yet.

The old nursing Mother's not hoary yet,
There is sap in her ancient tree:
She lifteth a bosom of glory yet,
Through her mists, to the Sun and the Sea—
Fair as the Queen of Love, fresh from the foam,
Or a star in a dark cloud set;
Ye may blazon her shame,—ye may leap at her name,—
But there's life in the Old Land yet.

Let the storm burst, you will find the Old Land
Ready-ripe for a rough, red fray!
She will fight as she fought when she took her stand
For the Right in the olden day.
Rouse the old royal soul, Europe's best hope
Is her sword-edge for Victory set!
She shall dash Freedom's foes down Death's bloody slope;
For there's life in the Old Land yet.

72

The Twenty-first of October at Trafalgar

AN OLD MAN-O'-WAR'S-MAN'S YARN

AY, ay, good Neighbours, I have seen
Him! sure as God's my life;
One of his chosen crew I've been;
Haven't I, old Good Wife?
God bless your dear eyes! didn't you vow
To marry me any weather,
If I came back with limbs enow
To keep my soul together?

Brave as a Lion was our Nel,
And gentle as a lamb:
It warms my blood once more to tell
The tale—gray as I am—

Mr. Massey altered the title of this poem to make it a companion piece to the following.

It makes the old life in me climb,
 It sets my soul a-swim;
I live twice over every time
 That I can talk of him.

You should have seen him as he trod
 The deck, our joy and pride;
You should have seen him, like a God
 Of storm, his War-horse ride!
You should have seen him as he stood
 Fighting for our good land,
With all the iron of soul and blood
 Turned to a sword in hand.

Our best beloved of all the brave
 That ever for Freedom fought;
And all his wonders of the wave
 For Fatherland were wrought!
He was the manner of man to show
 How Victories may be won;
So swift, you scarcely saw the blow;
 You looked—the deed was done.

He sailed his Ships for work: he bore
 His sword for battle-wear;

His creed was "*Best man to the fore*";
And he was always there.
Up any peak of peril where
There was but room for one:
The only thing he did not dare
Was any death to shun.

The Nelson-touch his men he taught,
And his great stride to keep;
His faithful fellows round him fought
Ten thousand heroes deep.
With a red pride of life, and hot
For him, their blood ran free;
They "*minded not the showers of shot,*
No more than peas," said he.

Napoleon saw our Sea-king thwart
His landing on our Isle;
He gnashed his teeth, he gnawed his heart,
At Nelson on the Nile,
Who set his fleet in flames, to light
The Lion to his prey,
And lead Destruction through the night
Upon his dreadful way.

Around the world he drove his game,
And ran his glorious race;
Nor rested till he hunted them
From off the Ocean's face;
Like that old War-dog who, till death,
Clung to the vessel's side
Till hands were lopped, then with his teeth
He held on till he died.

Ay, he could do the deeds that set
Old Fighters' hearts afire;
The edge of every spirit whet,
And every arm inspire.
Yet I have seen upon his face
The tears that, as they roll,
Show what a light of saintly grace
May clothe a Sailor's soul.

And when our Darling went to meet
Trafalgar's Judgment-day,
The people knelt down in the street
To bless him on his way.
He left the Country of his love
Watching him from afar;

It saw him through the battle move;
His heaven was in that star.

Magnificently glorious sight
It was in that great dawn!
Like one vast sapphire flashing light,
The sea, just breathing, shone.
Their ships, fresh-painted, stood up tall
And stately: ours were grim
And weatherworn, but one and all
In rare good fighting trim.

Our spirits were all flying light,
And into battle sped,
Straining for it on wings of might,
With feet of springy tread;
The light of battle on each face;
Its lust in every eye;
Our Sailor-blood at swiftest pace,
To catch the victory nigh.

His proudly-wasted face, wave-worn,
Was loftily serene;
I saw the brave, bright spirit burn
There, all too plainly seen;

As though the sword this time was drawn
 Forever from the sheath;
And when its work to-day was done,
 All would be dark in death.

His eye shone like a lamp of night
 Set in the porch of power;
The deed unborn was burning bright
 Within him at that hour!
His purpose, welded at white-heat,
 Cried like some visible Fate,
"*To-day we must not merely beat:*
 We will Annihilate."

He smiled to see the Frenchman show
 His reckoning for retreat,
With Cadiz port on his lee-bow;
 And held him then half beat.
They flew no Colours, till we drew
 Them out to strike with there!
Old Victory, for a prize or two,
 Had flags enough to spare.

Mast-high the famous signal ran;
 Breathless we catch each word:

"*England expects that every man*
Will do his duty." Lord,
You should have seen our faces! heard
Us cheering, row on row;
Like men before some furnace stirred
To a fiery fearful glow!

'Twas Collingwood our Lee line led,
And cut their centre through.
"*See how he goes in!*" Nelson said,
As his first broadside flew,
And near four hundred foemen fall.
Up went another cheer.
"*Ah, what would Nelson give,*" said Coll,
But to be with us here!"

We grimly kept our vanward path;
Over us hummed their shot;
But, silently, we reigned our wrath,
Held on, and answered not,
Till we could grip them face to face,
And pound them for our own,
Or hug them in a war-embrace,
Till one or both went down.

How calm he was! when first he felt
The sharp edge of that fight.
Cabined with God alone he knelt;
The prayer still lay in light
Upon his face, that used to shine
In battle,—flash with life,
As though the glorious blood ran wine,
Dancing with that wild strife.

"*Fight for us, Thou Almighty One!*
Give victory once again!
And if I fall, Thy will be done:
Amen, Amen, Amen!"
With such a voice he bade good-bye;
The mournfullest old smile wore:
"*Farewell! God bless you, Blackwood, I*
Shall never see you more."

And four hours after, he had done
With winds and troubled foam.
The Reaper was borne dead upon
Our load of Harvest-home—
Not till he knew the Old Flag flew
Alone on all the deep;

Then said he, "*Hardy, is that you?*
Kiss me." And fell asleep.

Well, 'twas his chosen death below
The deck in triumph trod;
'Tis well. A Sailor's soul should go
From his good ship to God.
He would have chosen death aboard,
From all the crowns of rest;
And burial with the Patriot sword
Upon the Victor's breast.

"Not a great sinner." No, dear heart,
God grant in our death-pain,
We may have played as well our part,
And feel as free from stain.
We see the spots on such a star,
Because it burned so bright;
But on the other side they are
All lost in greater light.

And so he went upon his way,
A higher deck to walk,
Or sit in some eternal day,
And of the old time talk

With Sailors old, who, on that coast,
 Welcome the homeward bound;
Where many a gallant soul we've lost
 And Franklin will be found.

Where amidst London's roar and moil
 That cross of peace upstands,
Like Martyr with his heavenward smile,
 And flame-lit, lifted hands,
There lies the dark and mouldered dust;
 But that magnanimous
And manly Seaman's soul, I trust,
 Lives on in some of us.

73

The Fifth of November at Inkerman

'TWAS Midnight ere our Guns' loud laugh
at their wild work did cease,
And by the smouldering fires of War we lit the
pipe of peace.
At Four, a burst of Bells went up through night's
cathedral dark,
It seemed so like our Sabbath chimes, we could
but wake, and hark!
So like the Bells that call to prayer in the dear
land far away;
Their music floated on the air, and kissed us—
to betray.
Our Camp lay on the rainy hill, all silent as a
cloud,
Its very heart of life stood still i' the Mist that
brought its shroud;

Mr. Massey prefers the full title here given to the later shortened form.

For Death was walking in the dark, and smiled
his smile to see
How all was ranged and ready for a sumptuous
jubilee.

O wily are the Russians, and they came up
through the mirk—
Their feet all shod for silence in the best blood
of the Turk!
While in its banks our fiery tide of War serenely
slept,
Their subtle serpentry unrolled, and up the hill-
side crept.
In the Ruins of the Valley do the Birds of
Carnage stir?
A creaking in the gloom like wheels! feet trample
—bullets whir—
By God! the Foe is on us! Now the Bugles
with a start
Thrill—like the cry of a wronged Queen—to the
red roots of the heart;
And long and loud the wild war-drums with
throbbing triumph roll,—
A sound to set the blood on fire, and warm the
shivering soul.

The war-worn and the weary leaped up ready,
fresh, and true!
No weak blood curdled white i' the face, no valour
turned to dew.
Majestic as a God defied, arose our little Host—
All for the peak of peril pushed—each for the
fiercest post!
Thorough mist and thorough mire, and o'er the
hill-brow scowling grim,
As is the frown of Slaughter when he dreams
his dreadful dream.
No Sun! but none is needed,—Men can feel their
way to fight,
The lust of Battle in their face—eyes filled with
fiery light;
And long ere dawn was red in heaven, upon the
dark earth lay
The prophesying morning-red of a great and
glorious day.

As Bridegroom leaves his wedded Bride in gentle
slumbers sealed,
Our England slumbered in the West, when her
Warriors went a-field.

We thought of her and swore that day to strike
immortal blows,
As all along our leaguered line the roar of battle
rose.
Her banners waved like blessing hands, and we
felt it was the hour
For a glorious grip till fingers met in the throat
of Russian power.
And at a bound, and with a sound that madly
cried to kill,
The Lion of Old England leapt in lightnings
from the hill:
And there he stood superb, through all that
Sabbath of the Sword,
And there he slew, with a terrible scorn, his
hunters, horde on horde.

All Hell seemed bursting on us, as the yelling
legions came—
The Cannon's tongues of quick red fire licked all
the hills a-flame!
Mad whistling shell, wild sneering shot, with
devilish glee went past,
Like fiendish feet and laughter hurrying down
the battle-blast;

And through the air, and round the hills, there ran a wrack sublime
As though Eternity were crashing on the shores of Time.
On Bayonets and Swords the smile of conscious victory shone,
As down to death we dashed the Rebels plucking at our Throne.
On, on they came with face of flame, and storm of shot and shell—
Up! up! like heaven-scalers, and we hurled them back to Hell.

Like the old Sea, white-lipped with rage, they dash and foam despair
On ranks of rock, and what a prize for the Wrecker Death was there!
But as 'twere River Pleasaunce, did our fellows take that flood,
A royal throbbing in the pulse that beat voluptuous blood:
The Guards went down to the fight in gray that's growing gory red—
See! save them, they're surrounded! Leap your ramparts of the dead,

And back the desperate battle, for there is but
one short stride
Between the Russ and victory! One more tug,
you true and tried—
The Red-Caps crest the hill! with bloody spur,
ride, Bosquet, ride!
Down like a flood from Etna foams their valour's
burning tide.

Now, God for Merrie England cry! Hurrah for
France the Grand!
We charge the foe together, all abreast, and
hand to hand!
He caught a shadowy glimpse across the smoke
of Alma's fray
Of the Destroying Angel that shall blast his
strength to-day.
We shout and charge together, and again, again,
again,
Our plunging battle tears its path, and paves
it with the slain.
Hurrah! the mighty host doth melt before our
fervent heat;
Against our side its breaking heart doth faint
and fainter beat.

And O, but 'tis a gallant show, and a merry march, as thus
We bound into the glorious goal with shouts victorious!

From morn till night, we fought our fight, and at the set of sun
Stood Conquerors on Inkerman—our Soldiers Battle won.
That morn their legions stood like corn in its pomp of golden grain!
That night the ruddy sheaves were reaped upon the misty plain!
We cut them down by thunder-strokes, and piled the shocks of slain:
The hill-side like a vintage ran, and reeled Death's harvest-wain.
We had hungry hundreds gone to sup in Paradise that night,
And robes of Immortality our ragged Braves bedight!
They fell in Boyhood's comely bloom, and Bravery's lusty pride;
But they made their bed o' the foemen dead, ere they laid down and died.

INKERMAN

We gathered round the tent-fire in the evening
cold and gray,
And thought of those who ranked with us in
Battle's rough array,
Our Comrades of the morn who came no more
from that fell fray!
The salt tears wrung out in the gloom of green
dells far away—
The eyes of lurking Death that in Life's crim-
son bubbles play—
The stern white faces of the Dead that on the
dark ground lay
Like Statues of old Heroes, cut in precious
human clay—
Some with a smile as life had stopped to music
proudly gay—
The household Gods of many a heart all dark and
dumb to-day!
And hard hot eyes grew ripe for tears, and
hearts sank down to pray.

From alien lands, and dungeon-grates, how eyes
will strain to mark
This waving Sword of Freedom burn and beckon
through the dark!

The Martyrs stir in their red graves, and rusted armour rings
Adown the long aisles of the dead, where lie the warrior Kings.
To the proud Mother England came the radiant Victory
With Laurels red, and a bitter cup like some last agony.
She took the cup, she drank it up, she raised her laurelled brow:
Her sorrow seemed like solemn joy, she looked so noble now.
The dim divine of distance died—the purpled Past grew wan,
As came that crowning Glory o'er the heights of Inkerman.

74

England

YOU Lovers of our England, do but look
On this dear Country over whose fair face
God drooped a bridal veil of tender mist,
That she might keep her beauty virginal,
And He might see her through a softer glory;
So very meek and reverent doth she stand
Within this shadow soft of Love Divine,
More lovable, and not as brighter lands
Whose bolder beauty stares up in heaven's face.
Look on her now, this jewel of the world,
Set in that marriage-ring of circling sea!
She smiles upon her Image in its calm,
Like some proud Ship that floateth in its shadow.
And as a happy Lover clasps his Bride,

Included at the suggestion of the author, who thinks this passage from "England and Louis Napoleon" fully as patriotic as another poem of his that was first thought of, "England goes to Battle," and less hackneyed.

The fond Sea folds her round, and his brimmed life
Runs rippling to her inmost heart of hearts,
Until it swims a-flood with happiness;
And all the waters of her love leap back
To him exultant from a thousand hills.
From his salt virtue comes her northern sweetness.
How his rough kisses make her roses bloom!
Once in his rousèd wrath he lifted up
A mighty Armada in his arms, and dashed
It into sea-drift at his Mistress' feet.
And still he threatens with his voice of storms
The plots of all Invaders; still he keeps
Eternal watch around. How proud in peace,
The wild white horses rear and foam along
And bring to her the Harvests of the world!
How grand in war they bear her battle-line
In strength half-smiling, perfect Power crowned
With careless grace, which seemeth to all eyes
The plume of Triumph nodding as it goes;
For visible victory sits upon her brow,
And shines upon her sails.
See where She sits
Holding at heart her noble dead, and nursing
Her living Children on the old brave virtue;

ENGLAND

Wearing the rainy radiance of the morning,
With silver sweetness swimming in her tears,
Feeling the glory rippling down from heaven,
With smiles from all her wild flowers, her green leaves,
And nooks where Old Time live their Shepherd ways.
We cannot count her heroes who lay down
In quiet graveyards when their work was done;
But mound on mound they rise all over the land
To bar a Tyrant's path, and make his feet
To stumble like the blind man among tombs.
Her brave dead make our earth heroic dust;
Their spirit glitters in our England's face
And makes her shine, a Star in blackest night,
Calm at her heart, and glory round her head.
We think of all who fought, and who are now
Immortals in the heaven of her love;
The Martyrs who have made of burning wrongs
Their fiery chariot, and gone up to God;
The saintly Sorrows that now walk in white;
Till faces bloom like battle-Banners flushed
All over with most glorious memories.

We are a Chosen People; Freedom wears

Our English Rose for her peculiar crest,
Whoso dares touch it bleeds upon the thorn!
It may be that the time will come again
For one more desperate struggle to the death.
The eye of Evil on our England looks
With snaky sparkle still. It may be they
Will rouse the old Berserkir rage, and make
The vein of wrath throb livid on her brow,
And wake the grim Norse War-dog in her blood,
Until she springs afloat upon the sea
Like an Immortal white-winged on the air,
The joy of swiftness lightening through her veins.

Thrice hath our England swept the Seas, and cleared
Her Ocean-path, the Highways of the world,
And will again if Robbers lie in wait.
She hath stood fast when towering Nations hurled
In one vast wave their culminating power!
Through all that harvest day of bloody death,
They charged in vain, and dashed upon the edge
Of her red sword, and fell, at Waterloo!
We kept the shamble-slopes of Inkerman!

Through blood and fire and gloom of Indian War
We swam the Red Sea, and outrode the storm!
So shall we hold our own dear land with all
The old unvanquished soul, and we shall see
Their changing Empires shift like sand around
The Island Rock, the footstool of the Lord,
Where Freedom also lays her head, and rest
In calm or storm the best hopes of a world.

Ah, let the Peacemen preach, but let our Peace
Be Peace white-robed, and not white-livered Peace;
Be Right victorious, not triumphant Wrong!
These pallid Peacemen are to true men what
Our world might be without its Iron Ore;
But never may the grand old bravery die.
No, no! we must not let the death-fires dance
Along our heights with their funereal flames,
As Hell had thrust up many red-hot tongues
To get its lap of gore when earth is drenched.
Our green fields shall not blush in blood for us!
We will not let them pluck the old land down
To throne them in her seat; they must not wear
The Crown she raced for round the world and won.

Our Country has a name and fame might fill
The eyes of Hate and Envy with tame tears;
And they shall never lay her low while we
Are true to her in heart and head and hand.
And all who come in peace will find a home,
And all who come in war a mouthful of
Our dust in death, and Sea-beach for a grave.

Great starry thoughts grow luminous in the dark;
The Bird of Hope soars singing overhead!
We cannot fear for England, we can die
To do her bidding, but we cannot fear:
We who have heard her thunder-roll of deeds
Reverberating through the centuries;
By battle fire-light had the stories told;
We who have seen how proudly she prepared
For sacrifice, how radiantly her face
Flashed when the Bugle blew its bloody sounds,
And bloody weather fluttered her old Flag;
We who have seen her with the red heaps round;
We who have known the mightiest Powers dashed back
Broken from her impregnable sea-walls;
We who have learned how in the darkest hour
The greatest light breaks out, and in the time

Of trial she reveals her noblest strength;
We do not, will not, cannot fear for Her,
We who have felt her big heart beat in ours.

Hail to Thee, Mother of Nations! mighty yet
To strive, or suffer, and give overthrow!
For all the Powers of Nature fight for thee.
Spirits that sleep in glory shall awake,
Come down and drive thy Car of victory
Over thine enemies' necks. Thy past renown
Shall turn to future strength. Long will they wait
Who privily lurk to stab thee when the Night
Shall cover all in darkness.
Dear old Land,
Thy shining glories are no Sunset gleams,
But clouds that kindle round some great new
Dawn!

75

Lewis Morris (Sir)

A Song of Empire

June 20, 1887

FIRST Lady of our English race,
In Royal dignity and grace
Higher than all in old ancestral blood,
But higher still in love of good,
And care for ordered Freedom, grown
To a great tree where'er
In either hemisphere,
Its vital seeds are blown;
Where'er with every day begun
Thy English bugles greet the coming sun!

Thy life is England's. All these fifty years
Thou from thy lonely Queenly place

* Abridged by the author for this volume.

Hast watched the clouds and sunshine on her face;
Hast marked her changing hopes and fears;
Her joys and sorrows have been always thine;
Always thy quick and Royal sympathy
Has gone out swiftly to the humblest home,
Wherever grief and pain and suffering come.

Therefore it is that we
Take thee for head and symbol of our name.
For fifty years of reign thou wert the same,
Therefore to-day we make our jubilee.
Firm set on ancient right, as on thy people's love,
Unchecked thy wheels of empire onward move.
Not as theirs is thy throne
Who, though their hapless subjects groan,
Sit selfish, caring not at all,
Until the fierce mob surges and they fall,
Or the assassin sets the down-trod free.
Not such thy fate on this thy jubilee,
But love and reverence in the hearts of all.

Oh England! Empire wide and great
As ever from the shaping hand of fate
Did issue on the earth, august, large grown!
What were the Empires of the past to thine,
The old old Empires ruled by kings divine—

Egypt, Assyria, Rome? What rule was like
thine own,
Who over all the round world bearest sway?
Not those alone who thy commands obey
Thy subjects are; but in the boundless West
Our grandsires lost, still is thy reign confest.
"The Queen" they call thee, the young People
strong,
Who, being Britons, might not suffer wrong,
But are reknit with us in reverence for thee;
Therefore it is we make our jubilee.

See what a glorious throng they come,
Turned to their ancient home,
The children of our England! See
What vigorous company
Thou sendest, Greater England of the Southern
Sea!
Thy stately cities, sown with domes and spires,
Chase the illumined night with festal fires
In honour of their Queen, whose happy reign
Began when, 'mid their central roar,
The naked savage trod the pathless plain.
Thousands of miles, North, South, East, West,
to-day,

Their countless herds and flocks unnumbered stray.
Theirs are the vast primæval forest depths profound;
Yet everywhere are found
The English laws, the English accents fair,
'Mid burning North or cooler Southern air.
A world within themselves, and with them blent
Island with continent.
The green isles, jewels on the tropic blue,
Where flower and tree and bird are strange and new;
Or that which lies within a temperate air
As summer-England fair;
Or those, our Southern Britain that shall be,
Set in the lonely sea.
Lands of deep fiord and snow-clad soaring hill
Where-through the ocean-currents ebb and fill,
And craters vast, from which the prisoned force
Of the great earth-fires runs its dreadful course.
And vales of fern and palm, whence rising like a dream
High in mid-heaven, the ghostly ice-fields gleam.

And from her far and wintry North

The great Dominion issues forth,
Fit nurse of stalwart British hearts and strong;
From her black pine woods, deep in snow,
Her billowy prairies boundless as the sea,
Where on the sweet untroubled soil
Yearly the unnoticed, countless wild-flowers blow
And by men's fruitful and compelling toil
Yearly the deep and bounteous harvests grow
From the lone plains, o'er which the icy wind
Sweeps from the North, leaving the Pole be-
hind;
In whose brief summer suns, so fierce they shine
Flourish alike the apple and the vine;
From teeming ancient cities bright and fair,
Whether in summer's heat or frosty wintry air,
Stamped with the nameless charm and grace
Of a more joyous race;
Or on the rounding prairie nestling down
Homestead and frequent new-built town.
Even to those ultimate wilds where comes to be
Another Westminster on the Pacific Sea.

Nor shall thy Western Isles
Be wanting, where the high green breakers fall
Upon the torrid shore, and nature smiles;

And yet sometimes broods over all,
Thick woods and hot lagunes with steaming breath,
A nameless presence with a face of death.
Fair balmy Isles, where never wintry air
Ruffles the scentless tropic blossoms fair,
Upon whose sun-warmed fruitful soil
Our father's dusky freedmen toil.
Lands of bright plumes that flash from tree to tree,
Long creepers trailing thick with brilliant bloom,
And loud upon the forest's silent gloom
The plunging surges of the encircling sea.

And from the ancient land
Scorching beneath the strong unfailing sun,
Round thee thy unnumbered subject millions stand;
From many a storied city fair,
Old ere our England, first begun,
From marble tomb and temple white,
Built ere our far forefathers were,
And still a miracle defying Time;
Palaces gray with age and dark with crime,
Fierce superstitions, only quenched in blood,

And sweet flower-fancies yearning towards the light,
And lustral cleansings in the sacred flood,
Where by dim temple cool, or shaded street,
From hill or parchèd plain the wayworn pilgrims meet.

And from the unhappy continent
Which breeds the savage and the slave—
From our enormous South, there shall be sent
A scanty band of strong self-governed men.
And from those poisoned swamps, to-day a grave,
But which one day shall smile with plenty, when
The onward foot of Knowledge, slow, sublime,
Has traversed her and set her children free
From ocean to her fabulous inland sea,
And the fierce savage, full of kingly grace,
Is father of a gentler race,
And peaceful commerce heals the wounds of Time,
And the long history of blood and pain
Comes nevermore again.

And nearer to thee still, and dearer yet,
Thy people of these little Northern Isles,

Who never shall their Queen forget,
Nor be forgotten, whether Fortune smiles
Or armèd Europe storm around,
Whom none assail, beyond the waves' deep sound,
Behind their surge-struck ramparts safe and free.
These are thy closest subjects, these
The brain and heart of Empire, as thy Rose
Within its close-ranged petals comes to hold
A perfumed heart of gold,
Wherein the seed of the miraculous flower,
Safe hid, defies Fate's power.
And most of all thy wondrous mother-town
Upon our broad Thames sitting like a crown,
Who, 'mid her healthful labour-laden air,
Grows every day more fair;
Whom not for fairness do her children prize,
But for her gracious homely memories—
A nation, not a city, the loved home
Whereto the longing thoughts of exiled Britons come!

Flash, festal fires, high on the joyous air!
Clash, joy-bells! joy-guns, roar! and, jubilant trumpets, blare!

Let the great noise of our rejoicing rise!
Gleam, long-illumined cities, to the skies
Round all the earth, in every clime,
So far your distance half confuses time!
As in the old Judæan history,
Fling wide the doors and set the prisoners free!
Wherever England is o'er all the world,
Fly, banner of Royal England, stream unfurled!
The proudest Empire that has been, to-day
Rejoices and makes solemn jubilee.
For England! England! we our voices raise!
Our England! England! England! in our Queen
we praise!
We love not war, but only peace,
Yet never shall our England's power decrease!
Whoever guides our helm of State,
Let all men know it, England shall be great!
We hold a vaster Empire than has been!
Nigh half the race of man is subject to our
Queen!
Nigh half the wide, wide earth is ours in fee!
And where her rule comes, all are free.
And therefore 'tis, oh Queen, that we,
Knit fast in bonds of temperate liberty,
Rejoice to-day, and make our solemn jubilee!!

76

The Imperial Institute. An Ode

July 4, 1887

WITH soaring voice and solemn music sing!
High to Heaven's gate let pealing trumpets ring!
To day our hands consolidate
The Empire of a thousand years:
Delusive hopes, distracting fears,
Have passed and left her great.
For Britain, Britain, we our jubilant anthems raise,
Uplift your voices all: worthy is she of praise!
Our Britain, issuing at the call of Fate
From her lone islets in the Northern Sea,
Donned her Imperial robe, assumed her crownèd state,
Took the sole sceptre of the Free;

This Ode, Sir Lewis Morris tells us, was written and completed at the request of the Prince of Wales with only a few hours' notice, and set to music by Sir Arthur Sullivan immediately afterwards.

'Mid clang of arms her crescent glory rose,
By shattered fleet and flaming town :
Victorious at the last o'er all her foes,
Embattled rolls her splendid story down.

Soldier and seaman, side by side,
Her strong sons, greatly dared and bravely died.
Close on their steps her dauntless toilers went
O'er unknown sea and pathless continent,
Till when the centuries of strife were done
They left the greatest Realm beneath the sun.
Praise them and her ; your grateful voices raise.
Mother of Freedom! thou art worthy of our praise.

No more we seek our Realm's increase
By War's red rapine, but by white-winged Peace ;
To-day we seek to bind in one,
Till all our Britain's work be done—
Through wider knowledge closer grown,
As each fair sister by the rest is known,
And mutual Commerce, mighty to efface
The envious bars of Time and Place,
Deep-pulsing from a common heart
And through a common speech expressed,—

THE IMPERIAL INSTITUTE

From North to South, from East to West,
Our great World Empire's every part;
A universal Britain strong
To raise up Right and beat down Wrong.
Let this thing be! Who shall our Realm divide?
Ever we stand together, kinsmen, side by side!

To-day we would make free
Our millions of their glorious heritage.
Here, Labour crowds in hopeless misery,—
There is unbounded work and ready wage.
The salt breeze, calling, stirs our Northern blood,—
Lead we the toilers to their certain good;
Guide we their feet to where
Is spread for those who dare
A happier Britain 'neath an ampler air.
Upraise, O Palace fair!
With ordered knowledge of each far-off land
For all to understand!
Upraise, O Palace fair, where for the Poor shall be
Wise thought and love to guide o'er the dividing sea.
First Lady of our British race!
'Tis well that with thy peaceful Jubilee

This glorious dream begins to be.
This thy lost Consort would ; this would thy Son,
Who has seen all thy Empire face to face
And fain would leave it One.
Oh ! may the Hand which rules our Fate
Keep this our Britain great !
We cannot tell, we can but pray
Heaven's blessing on our work to-day.
Upraise, O Palace fair, where every eye may see
This proud embodied Unity !
For Britain and our Queen one voice we raise,—
Laud them, rejoice, peal forth : worthy are they
of praise !

77

ALFRED AUSTIN (Poet Laureate)

Is Life Worth Living?

* * * * *

Is life worth living? Yes, so long
As there is wrong to right,
Wail of the weak against the strong,
Or tyranny to fight;
Long as there lingers gloom to chase,
Or streaming tear to dry,
One kindred woe, one sorrowing face
That smiles as we draw nigh;
Long as at tales of anguish swells
The heart, and lids grow wet,
And at the sound of Christmas bells
We pardon and forget;
So long as Faith and Freedom reigns,
And loyal Hope survives,
And gracious Charity remains
To leaven lowly lives;

While there is one untrodden track
For Intellect or Will,
And men are free to think and act
Life is worth living still.

Not care to live while English homes
Nestle in English trees,
And England's Trident-Sceptre roams
Her territorial seas!
Not live while English songs are sung
Wherever blows the wind,
And England's laws and England's tongue
Enfranchise half mankind!
So long as in Pacific main,
Or on Atlantic strand,
Our kin transmit the parent strain,
And love the Mother-Land;
So long as in this ocean Realm,
Victoria and her Line
Retain the heritage of the helm,
By loyalty divine;
So long as flashes English steel,
And English trumpets shrill,
He is dead already who doth not feel
Life is worth living still.

78

Chorus of Islanders
(From "Look Seaward, Sentinel")

SWEET are the ways of peace, and sweet
The gales that fan the foam
That sports with silvery-twinkling feet
Around our island home.
But should the winds of battle shrill,
And the billows crisp their mane,
Down to the shore, from vale, from hill,
From hamlet, town, and plain!
The ocean our forefathers trod
In many a forest keel,
Shall feel our feet once more, but shod
With ligaments of steel.
Ours is the Sea, to rule, to keep,
Our realm, and if ye would
Challenge dominion of the deep,
Then make that challenge good.

But ware ye lest your vauntings proud
 Be coffined in the surge,
Our breakers be for you a shroud,
 Our battle-song your dirge.
Peaceful within our peaceful home
 We ply the loom and share,
Peaceful above the peaceful foam
 Our pennons float and fare;
Bearing for other peaceful lands,
 Through sunshine, storm, and snow,
The harvest of industrious hands
 Peacefully to and fro.
But so ye will it, then our sails
 The blasts of war shall swell,
And hold and hulk, now choked with bales,
 Be crammed with shot and shell.
The waves impregnably shall bear
 Our bulwarks on their breast,
And eyes of steel unsleeping glare
 Across each billowy crest;
Along the trenches of the deep
 Unflinching faces shine,
And Britain's stalwart sailors keep
 The bastions of the brine.

CHORUS OF ISLANDERS

Ocean itself, from strand to strand,
 Our citadel shall be,
And, though the world together band,
Not all the legions of the land
Shall ever wrest from England's hand
The Sceptre of the Sea.

79

To England

MEN deemed thee fallen, did they? fallen like Rome,
Coiled into self to foil a Vandal throng:
Not wholly shorn of strength, but vainly strong;
Weaned from thy fame by a too happy home,
Scanning the ridges of thy teeming loam,
Counting thy flocks, humming thy harvest song,
Callous, because thyself secure, 'gainst wrong,
Behind the impassable fences of the foam!
The dupes! Thou dost but stand erect, and lo!
The nations cluster round; and while the horde
Of wolfish packs slouch homeward to their snow,
Thou, 'mid thy sheaves in peaceful seasons stored,
Towerest supreme, victor without a blow,
Smilingly leaning on thy undrawn sword!

80

Sonnets: Written in Mid-Channel

I

NOW upon English soil I soon shall stand,
Homeward from climes that fancy deems more fair;
And well I know that there will greet me there
No soft foam fawning upon smiling strand,
No scent of orange-groves, no zephyrs bland,
But Amazonian March, with breast half bare
And sleety arrows whistling through the air
Will be my welcome from that burly land.
Yet he who boasts his birthplace yonder lies,
Owns to his heart a mood akin to scorn
For sensuous slopes that bask 'neath Southern skies,
Teeming with wine and prodigal of corn,
And, gazing through the mist with misty eyes,
Blesses the brave bleak land where he was born.

81

II

AND wherefore feels he thus? Because its shore
Nor conqueror's foot nor despot's may defile,
But Freedom walks unarmed about the isle,
And Peace sits musing beside each man's door.
Beyond these straits, the wild-beast mob may roar,
Elsewhere the veering demagogue beguile:
We, hand in hand with the Past, look on and smile,
And tread the ways our fathers trod before.
What though some wretch, whose glory you may trace
Past lonely hearths and unrecorded graves,
Round his Sword-sceptre summoning swarms of slaves,
Menace *our* shores with conflict or disgrace,—
We laugh behind the bulwark of the waves,
And fling the foam defiant in his face.

82

Richard Garnett

Abroad

FORESTS that beard the avalanche,
Levels, empurpled slopes of vine,
Wrecks, sadly gay with flower and branch,
I love you, but you are not mine.

The sweet domestic sanctity
Fades in the fiery sun, like dew;
My Love beheld and passed you by,
My fathers shed no blood for you.

Pause, rambling clouds, while fancy fain
Your white similitude doth trace
To England's cliffs, so may your rain
Fall blissful on your native place!

It was neither among "forests that beard the avalanche," nor upon "empurpled slopes of vine," that the above poem was written, but in London, we are told by Dr. Garnett, whose great knowledge and greater kindness have helped so much in the preparation of this volume in which it is included.

83

Algernon Charles Swinburne

England: An Ode

I

SEA and strand, and a lordlier land than sea-tides rolling and rising sun
Clasp and lighten in climes that brighten with day when day that was here is done,
Call aloud on their children, proud with trust that future and past are one.

Far and near from the swan's nest here the storm-birds bred of her fair white breast,
Sons whose home was the sea-wave's foam, have borne the fame of her east and west;
North and south has the storm-wind's mouth rang praise of England and England's quest.

Fame, wherever her flag flew, never forbore to
fly with an equal wing:
France and Spain with their warrior train bowed
down before her as thrall to king;
India knelt at her feet, and felt her sway more
fruitful of life than spring.

Darkness round them as iron bound fell off
from races of elder name,
Slain at sight of her eyes, whose light bids free-
dom lighten and burn as flame;
Night endures not the touch that cures of king-
ship tyrants, and slaves of shame.

All the terror of time, where error and fear
were lords of a world of slaves,
Age on age in resurgent rage and anguish dark-
ening as waves on waves,
Fell or fled from a face that shed such grace as
quickens the dust of graves.

Things of night at her glance took flight; the
strengths of darkness recoiled and sank:
Sank the fires of the murderous pyres whereon
wild agony writhed and shrank:

Rose the light of the reign of right from gulfs
of years that the darkness drank.

Yet the might of her wings in flight, whence
glory lightens and music rings,
Loud and bright as the dawn's, shall smite and
still the discord of evil things,
Yet not slain by her radiant reign, but darkened
now by her sail-stretched wings.

II

Music made of change and conquest, glory born
of evil slain,
Stilled the discord, slew the darkness, bade the
lights of tempest wane,
Where the deathless dawn of England rose in
sign that right should reign.

Mercy, where the tiger wallowed mad and blind
with blood and lust,
Justice, where the jackal yelped and fed, and
slaves allowed it just,
Rose as England's light on Asia rose, and
smote them down to dust.

Justice bright as mercy, mercy girt by justice
with her sword,
Smote and saved and raised and ruined, till
the tyrant-ridden horde
Saw the lightning fade from heaven and knew
the sun for God and lord.

Where the footfall sounds of England, where
the smile of England shines,
Rings the tread and laughs the face of freedom,
fair as hope divines
Days to be, more brave than ours and lit by
lordlier stars for signs.

All our past acclaims our future: Shakespeare's
voice and Nelson's hand,
Milton's faith and Wordsworth's trust in this
our chosen and chainless land,
Bear us witness: come the world against her,
England yet shall stand.

Earth and sea bear England witness if he lied
who said it; he
Whom the winds that ward her, waves that
clasp and herb and flower and tree

Fed with English dews and sunbeams, hail as
more than man may be.

No man ever spake as he that bade our Eng-
land be but true,
Keep but faith with England fast and firm, and
none should bid her rue;
None may speak as he: but all may know the
sign that Shakespeare knew.

III

From the springs of the dawn, from the depths
of the noon, from the heights of the night
that shine,
Hope, faith, and remembrance of glory that
found but in England her throne and her
shrine,
Speak louder than song may proclaim them,
that here is the seal of them set for a
sign.

And loud as the sea's voice thunders applause
of the land that is one with the sea
Speaks Time in the ear of the people, that
never at heart was not inly free

The word of command that assures us of life, if
we will but that life shall be;

If the race that is first of the races of men who
behold unashamed the sun
Stand fast and forget not the sign that is given
of the years and the wars that are done,
The token that all who are born of its blood
should in heart as in blood be one.

The words of remembrance that lightens as fire
from the steeps of the storm-lit past
Bids only the faith of our fathers endure in us,
firm as they held it fast:
That the glory which was from the first upon
England alone may endure to the last.

That the love and the hate may change not,
the faith may not fade, nor the wrath nor
scorn,
That shines for her sons and that burns for her
foemen as fire of the night or the morn:
That the births of her womb may forget not
the sign of the glory wherein they were
born.

A light that is more than the sunlight, an air
that is brighter than morning's breath,
Clothes England about as the strong sea clasps
her, and answers the word that it saith ;
The word that assures her of life if she change
not, and choose not the ways of death.

Change darkens and lightens around her, alter-
nate in hope and in fear to be :
Hope knows not if fear speak truth, nor fear
whether hope be not blind as she :
But the sun is in heaven that beholds her
immortal, and girdled with life by the sea.

84

New Year's Day

NEW Year be good to England! Bid her name
Shine sunlike as of old on all the sea:
Make strong her soul: set all her spirit free:
Bind fast her homeborn foes with links of shame
More strong than iron and more keen than flame:
Seal up their lips for shame's sake: so shall she
Who was the light that lightened freedom be,
For all false tongues, in all men's eyes the same.

O last-born child of Time, earth's eldest lord,
God undiscrowned of godhead, who for man
Begets all good and evil things that live,
Do thou, his new-begotten son, implore
Of hearts that hope and fear not, make thy span
Bright with such light as history bids thee give.

85

THEODORE WATTS-DUNTON

Jubilee Greeting at Spithead to the Men of Greater Britain, *June 26th*, 1897

I

BEYOND the stars your sires rejoice
Who hear to-day this iron clang and rattle,
And they recall the Channel's voice
Which in old fights lent music to the battle,
For breath of Death can never smother
For them the voice when this bright bosom heaves
With pride of Her she guards—the Mother
For whom our Drake with many a brother
Won from the world the robe above all other
The proud sea weaves.

II

Therefore this sight is yours and ours
Whose fathers see it, wheresoe'er they dwell:
No breath they breathe from Eden flowers
Can win them from the Channel's salt sweet smell;
And yonder skyey wings that hover
Kindling each steel-clad titan till he glows—
Wings of Old England's Angel-lover—
Your fathers see them shine above her—
They see yon Angel of the Channel cover
Spithead with rose.

III

With Kings that Angel learnt to fight:
Their hireling axes shivered in their helves:
His foe is now the people's spite
When bloody-minded nations kill themselves;
But still, round England's sacred crags,
His billowy squadrons roll round Her ye love,
Moving with glory of varying flags
With purple pennon's golden jags,
Mirrored from every cloud that flies or drags
Or streams above.

IV

When foemen threat He smiles, He smiles!
Yea, England's Warder-angel stirs His wings—
Then out from furthest Scilly Isles,
Right on by Deal a glittering laughter springs,
As when of old His billowy host
Cried out "Ha! ha! they come, the ships of Spain!"—
As when that day around the coast
The news of Trafalgar was tossed
Ere yet His billows knew what England lost—
What man lay slain.

V

The eyes of heroes light the Past:
The men who builded Time's heroic years,
Who quelled the world 'neath sail and mast,
Can see each armoured ship beyond the spheres—
Can see yon flag of curling smoke
From funnels of our Angel's Admiral Steam—
They talk of how the Armada broke
Against Britannia's shield of oak

Whilst there on wheels of storm with foam-flecked yoke
He drove his team.

VI

Your fathers grew to demi-gods
Breathing his breath, the same ye breathe to-day;
And Drake, when fronting grievous odds
Drew strength from Channel wind and Channel spray;
And, through that fateful August night
When Grenville read his name on flags of Death,
He saw, by love's high second-sight,
Far off beyond the monstrous fight,
The winds of England's Warder hovering bright
And felt His breath.

VII

As if His conquering coursers heard
Prophetic strains from mystic harps of Ocean,
His mighty heart to-day is stirred,
Hearing your voice to some sublime emotion

Which makes His pinions glow, and makes
The Channel heave as if the waters knew;
Brothers, the hand of Evening shakes
A rosier haze through rosier flakes
Because your Angel of the Channel wakes
To welcome you.

86

Austin Dobson

A Ballad of the Armada

KING PHILIP had vaunted his claims;
He had sworn for a year he would sack us;
With an army of heathenish names
He was coming to fagot and stack us;
Like the thieves of the sea he would track us,
And shatter our ships on the main;
But we had bold Neptune to back us—
And where are the galleons of Spain?

"These verses," Mr. Austin Dobson tells us, in an exquisitely-written note, sealed with the *sign of the lyre*, "first appeared, with all the decoration of black letter and Wardour Street spelling, in the (now defunct) *St. James's Magazine* for October, 1877,—that being the time when the epidemic of French forms was first breaking out seriously. From the *St. James's Magazine*, they were reprinted, in the *Second* Edition of *Proverbs in Porcelain*, 1878."

His carackes were christened of dames
To the kirtles whereof he would tack us;
With his saints and his gilded stern-frames
He had thought like an egg-shell to crack us;
Now Howard may get to his Flaccus,
And Drake to his Devon again,
And 'Hawkins bowl rubbers to Bacchus—
For where are the galleons of Spain?

Let his Majesty hang to St. James
The axe that he whetted to hack us;
He must play at some lustier games
Or at sea he can hope to out-thwack us;
To his mines of Peru he would pack us
To tug at his bullet and chain;
Alas! that his Greatness should lack us!—
But where are the galleons of Spain?

ENVOY.

Gloriana! the Don may attack us
Whenever his stomach be fain;
He must reach us before he can rack us, . . .
And where are the galleons of Spain?

87

Robert Bridges

Founder's Day

A Secular Ode on the Ninth Jubilee of Eton College

CHRIST and His Mother, heavenly maid,
Mary, in whose fair name was laid
Eton's corner, bless our youth
With truth and purity, mother of truth.

O ye neath breezy skies of June,
By silver Thames's lulling tune,
In shade of willow or oak, who try
The golden gates of poesy;

This Eton Jubilee Ode was composed — Mr. Bridges writes to us—at the anniversary. "The references to Henry VI.," he says, "are from Shakespeare's 'So many hours,' etc., taken from his lovely speech on Shepherd's life in Part III., Act II., Scene V. 'Improve the best' is a maxim which is definitely not 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number.'"

Or on the tabled sward all day,
Match your strength in England's play,
Scholars of Henry, giving grace
To toil and force in game or race;

Exceed the prayer and keep the fame
Of him the sorrowful king who came
Here in his realm a realm to found,
Where he might stand for ever crowned.

Or whether with naked bodies flashing
Ye plunge in the lashing weir, or dashing
The oars of cedar skiffs ye strain,
Round the rushes and home again;

Or what pursuit soe'er it be
That makes your mingled presence free,
When by the schoolgate, 'neath the limes
Ye muster, waiting the lazy chimes;

May Peace, that conquereth sin and death,
Temper for you her sword of faith:
Crown with honour the loving eyes,
And touch with mirth the mouth of the wise

FOUNDER'S DAY

Here is eternal spring: for you
The very stars of heaven are new,
And aged Fame again is born
Fresh as a peeping flower of morn.

For you shall Shakespeare's scene unroll,
Mozart shall steal your ravished soul,
Homer his bardic hymn rehearse,
Virgil recite his maiden verse.

Now learn, love, have, do, be the best:
Each in one thing excel the rest:
Strive: and hold fast this truth of heaven—
To him that hath shall more be given.

Slow on your dial the shadows creep,
So many hours for food and sleep,
So many hours till study tire,
So many hours for heart's desire.

These suns and moons shall memory save,
Mirrors bright for her magic cave:
Wherein may steadfast eyes behold
A self, that groweth never old.

O in such prime enjoy your lot,
And when ye leave regret it not:
With wishing gifts in festal state,
Pass ye the angel-sworded gate.

Then to the world let shine your light,
Children in play be lions in fight,
And match with red immortal deeds
The victory that made ring the meads:

Or by firm wisdom save your land
From giddy head and grasping hand:
IMPROVE THE BEST, so shall your sons
Better what ye have bettered once.

Send them here to the court of grace,
Bearing your name to fill your place:
Ye in their time shall live again,
The happy dream of Henry's reign:

And on his day your steps be bent,
Where, saint and king crowned with content,
He biddeth a prayer to bless his youth
With truth and purity, mother of truth.

June: MDCCCXCI.

88

Anglo-Indians passing through Florence

SAY who be these light-hearted sunburnt faces
In negligent and travel-stained array,
That in the city of Dante come to-day,
Haughtily visiting her holy places?
O these be noble men that hide their graces,
True England's blood, her ancient glories' stay,
By tales of fame diverted on their way
Home from the rule of Oriental races.
Life-trifling lions these, of gentle eyes
And motion delicate, but swift to fire
For honour; passionate where duty lies,
Most loved and loving: and they quickly tire
Of Florence, that she one day more denies
The embrace of wife and son, sister and sire.

The seventeenth sonnet in *The Growth of Love*.

89

The Fair Brass

AN effigy of brass
Trodden by careless feet
Of worshippers that pass,
Beautiful and complete,

Lieth in the sombre aisle
Of this old church unwreckt,
And still from modern style
Shielded by kind neglect.

It shows a warrior arm'd:
Across his iron breast
His hands by death are charmed
To leave his sword at rest,

Included at the suggestion of the author, as he thinks it more "patriotic" than either of his other two poems given here.

Wherewith he led his men
O'ersea, and smote to hell
The astonisht Saracen,
Nor doubted he did well.

Would we could teach our sons
His trust in face of doom,
Or give our bravest ones
A comparable tomb:

Such as to look on shrives
The heart of half its care;
So in each line survives
The spirit that made it fair,

So fair the characters,
With which the dusty scroll,
That tells his title, stirs
A requiem for his soul.

Yet dearer far to me,
And brave as he are they,
Who fight by land and sea
For England at this day;

Whose vile memorials,
In mournful marbles gilt,
Deface the beauteous walls
By growing glory built.

Heirs of our antique shrines,
Sires of our future fame,
Whose starry honour shines
In many a noble name

Across the deathful days,
Link'd in the brotherhood
That loves our country's praise,
And lives for heavenly good.

90

JAMES ASHCROFT NOBLE

The Red Thread of Honour

AMONG the hills of India
Dwelt warriors fierce and bold,
The sons of robber chieftains
Who, in the days of old,
Fought for their mountain freedom,
And, if by fate laid low,
Fell ever crowned with honour—
Their faces to the foe.

Now 'twas an ancient custom
Among those hillsmen brave,
When thus they found their kinsman,
To dig for him no grave;

From *Verses of a Prose Writer.* The incident which suggested this poem is related, Mrs. Noble mentions to us, in Napier's *History of the Administration in Scinde.* Frederick Robertson, of Brighton, also relates it, she says, in one of his published addresses.

But the torn blood-stained garments
They stripped from off the dead,
And then his wrist they circled
With green or crimson thread.

Many the green-decked warriors,
But only for a few
Was kept that highest honour,
That thread of sanguine hue;
For 'twas alone the bravest
Of those who nobly shed
Their life-blood in the battle
Whose wrists were bound with red.

And when they thus had graced them
Who fell before the foe,
They hurled their lifeless bodies
Into the plain below.
The earth did ne'er imprison
Those hillsmen brave and free,
The sky alone should cover
The warriors of Trukkee.

There came a time of conflict,
And a great armèd throng

Of England's bravest soldiers—
Avengers of the wrong,—
Marched through the gloomy gorges,
Forded the mountain rills,
Vowing that they would vanquish
Those robbers of the hills.

The road was strange and dubious;
Easy it was to stray;
And of those English soldiers
Eleven lost their way.
Led by a trusty leader,
They reached a fearful glen,
And saw a mountain stronghold
Guarded by forty men.

Guarded by forty veterans
Of that fierce robber band,
In every face defiance,
Weapons in every hand.
"Back," cried the trusty leader;
The soldiers would not hear,
But up the foe-crowned mountain
Charged with their English cheer.

With loud huzzas they stormed it,
Nor thought to turn from death,
But for old England's honour
Yielded their latest breath.
Short was the fight but deadly,
For, when our last man fell,
But sixteen of that forty
Were left the tale to tell.

But those sixteen were noble—
They loved a brave deed done;
They knew a worthy foeman,
And treated him as one.
And when the English soldiers
Sought for their comrades slain,
They found their stiff, stark corpses
Prostrate upon the plain:
They lay with blood-stained faces,
Fixed eyes, and firm-clenched fists,
But the red thread of honour,
Was twined around their wrists.

91

EDMUND GOSSE

Conclusion of "The Masque of Painters" •

PRINCE and PRINCESS, the show is done, and these
Once more retire across your narrow seas,
Since few of all this glorious train were bred
With the English leopards flying o'er their head;
Yet have we too an art that England claims,
Nor this unwedded to illustrious names;
Fresco and oils we learned from over sea
But no one drew in aqua-tint till we;
And, now in all lands, cunning artists use
To paint in English wise, in watery hues.

"The Masque of Painters" was performed by the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colours on May 19th, 1885, before the Prince and Princess of Wales.

These who have passed before your eyes to-night
Pursue this art, transparent, graceful, light,
Content to move along the humbler road,
And bend their painting to this native mode,
Proud to remember *Girtin's* ruined scene,
The tender wash of *Cozens'* silver-green,
Glover's soft touch, *Paul Sandby* cold and stern,
The trees of *Edridge* and the streams of *Hearne*,
Turner, whose wondrous art summed up the rest,—
Great Nature's boldest pupil and her best,—
The new Prometheus, who from Heaven has won,
Not fire, but light, but splendour of the sun;
And with him all who since his day have striven
To paint our world beneath the arch of heaven.

Then, ere I vanish, ah! let *Virgil* plead
For this home growth of art, this British weed;
And still among your foreign flowers find room
Close to your hearts for one wild English bloom.

92

RENNELL RODD

Spring Thoughts

MY England, island England, such leagues and leagues away,
It's years since I was with thee, when April wanes to May :—

Years since I saw the primrose, and watched the brown hillside
Put on white crowns of blossom and blush like April's bride ;

Years since I heard thy skylark, and caught the throbbing note
Which all the soul of springtide sends through the blackbird's throat.

"As I am always abroad except when on leave," says Mr. Rennell Rodd, of "Spring Thoughts," "it is a natural expression of a natural feeling."

Oh England, island England, if it has been my lot
To live long years in alien lands, with men who love thee not,

I do but love thee better who know each wind that blows,
The wind that slays the blossom, the wind that buds the rose,

The wind that shakes the taper mast and keeps the topsail furled,
The wind that braces nerve and arm to battle with the world:

I love thy moss-deep grasses, thy great untortured trees,
The cliffs that wall thy havens, the weed-scents of thy seas,

The dreamy river reaches, the quiet English homes,
The milky path of sorrel down which the spring-tide comes.

SPRING THOUGHTS

Oh land so loved through length of years, so tended and caressed,
The land that never stranger wronged nor foeman dared to waste,

Remember those thou speedest forth round all the world to be
Thy witness to the nations, thy warders on the sea!

And keep for those who leave thee and find no better place
The olden smile of welcome, the unchanged mother-face!

Athens, 1890.

93

Thobal

THERE was bloody work in the border hills, as it drew to Easter-tide,
And the flag that waved for England was humbled there in its pride,

They were grim familiar tidings, those few dark words of doom,
For the wide outposts of Empire are marked by the lonely tomb ;—

There was no new phase in the story, but another page writ red,
The ambush laid, and the few too few, and the roll of English dead !

"This poem," Mr. Rennell Rodd tells us in a letter, "refers to the exploits of Captain or Lieutenant, now Major, Grant, at the time of the massacre and insurrection in Manipur, which, I think, took place in '91. Part of it has, I believe, been set to music by Miss Maud Valerie White."

And we doubted not of the duty done, we were
sure they had died like men,
And we knew that the flag of England would
float on its mast again.

But it chanced there were thirty Ghoorkas who
were marching on their way,
With fifty more of the Burman folk that have
learned the word "obey,"

When the scouts brought in the tidings, and the
blood lust made them mad,
These eighty men of the loyal folk led on by
an English lad.

And he did not wait nor waver, he took no
count of the odds,
For he knew that he stood for England in the
face of the painted gods;

Though the hills poured down their thousands,
if the sturdy pluck held true,
He would stand his ground and show them what
an English lad could do.

So a week went by in silence, and at last the message came,
And the eighty men of Thobal had saved the English name.

Then speak, oh mother island, for was it not well done?
Be proud of thy step-children, and proudest of thy son!

Once more the world has seen it, far under alien skies,
The beating heart of England is where the old flag flies.

What though they deem thou sleepest, and smile to see thee range,
And follow wandering voices on many a wind of change;

What though men say thy gospel is the counter and the till,
The boys we send to the far world's end have the heart of the lion still;

The heart of Richard Grenville when he fought
with the fifty-three,
As he bled to death in the battered hull that
was lost in the Spanish sea;

The heart of Walter Raleigh, and the heart of
Francis Drake,
The heart of all the heroes who have lived for
England's sake;

The heart of those who ventured on many a
hopeless quest,
Till their dear divine unreason had joined the
east and west.

You boys that guard the warships that are the
ocean-Queen's,
Come back and tell your fathers what that name
of England means.

Round all the world's wide girdle, in Asia's dark
defiles,
In the yellow sands of torrid lands, in tempest-
sundered isles,

O'er many a lonely station the trebled crosses wave,
For justice to the weaker, and for freedom to the slave!

God sends her rulers wisdom,—the task to tame the lands,
The peril path of Empire is safe in these young hands.

Though the air be filled with strange new sound, and perplexed with doubtful creeds,
The boys we send to the far world's end still know what England needs.

94

A. Conan Doyle

Bowmen's Song

WHAT of the bow?
The bow was made in England,
Of true wood, of yew wood,
The wood of English bows;
For men who are free
Love the old yew-tree
And the land where the yew-tree grows.

What of the men?
The men were bred in England,
The bowmen, the yeomen,
The lads of dale and fell.
Here's to you and to you,
To the hearts that are true,
And the land where the true hearts dwell.

"They sing very joyfully," said Du Guesclin, "as though they were going to a festival."

"It is their wont when there is work to be done."

—*The White Company.*

95

MICHAEL FIELD

The Cheviots seen from the North

O LAND, rising up like wine
To the brim of a cup, land of mine,
Have I loved thee enough? The sign—

Though I loathe thy shams, thy shows,
Though I hold so dear thy foes,
As soon as the Cheviots rose,

There trembled beyond the gray
Reef of hills . . . oh, I cannot say!
But even the clouds that lay

"This poem was written," Michael Field tells us, "near Kelso, in a country-house. Referring to *Works and Days* for '94, I find a page where it is written—'On our way our host talks to us of the great sheep-fair: we are keenly interested. At the end of the journey the Cheviots rise. Then it is I feel that leap in my heart towards England.'"

Over bits of English plain
Seemed the veritable main,
Rich clouds of the harvest rain:

And the light beyond!—O land,
I begin to understand
Th' insensate love of the banned!

•

September, 1894.

96

From "Canute the Great"

Canute.

BEAR witness all
How I love England—her enfolding seas,
Her woods, her valley-hayfields, riversheds
Where cattle graze the meadows. I was born
In haunts of desolation; here abides
A sense of times gone by, of ancient law,
Religious benediction. My wild home
Seems but mere earth on which to breathe and eat;
This island has a human, blessèd bond
Between itself and men.

Act I. Scene IV

This speech of Canute's, in which the Viking thinks of England, "not as a child, but as a lover," reminds us of a speech of one of Michael Field's heroines, in which she says, —"Our country is not merely the people we have known; it is the past, it is inheritance, the fields our forefathers ploughed, the language we speak, the pressure of the whole future, all we hope for and venerate."

97

GEORGE DOUGLAS (SIR)

Winter Exile in the South

O ALIEN flowers! unseasonable blooms
That in this new, translucent, temperate air
Hide the sad truth, like garlands hung from tombs,
Winter within, is winter everywhere:
And nothing me your specious splendours stead—
Your aloe's scarlet, your magnolia's snow—
That, strange to that far land where I was bred,
Speak not of home, and friends, and long ago!

This was written in Gibraltar.

98

WILLIAM WATSON

Home-rootedness

I CANNOT boast myself cosmopolite;
I own to "insularity," although
'Tis fall'n from fashion, as full well I know.
For somehow, being a plain and simple wight,
I am skin-deep a child of the new light,
But chiefly am mere Englishman below,
Of island-fostering; and can hate a foe,
And trust my kin before the Muscovite.
Whom shall I trust if not my kin? And whom
Account so near in natural bonds as these
Born of my mother England's mighty womb,
Nursed on my mother England's mighty knees,
And lull'd as I was lull'd in glory and gloom
With cradle-song of her protecting seas?

"Fallen from Fashion," W. Watson said at that period. In this connection, note a remark in the Preface to our volume.

99

Restored ·Allegiance

DARK is thy trespass, deep be thy remorse,
O England! Fittingly thine own feet bleed,
Submissive to the purblind guides that lead
Thy weary steps along this rugged course.
Yet . . . when I glance abroad, and track
the source
More selfish far, of other nations' deed,
And mark their tortuous craft, their jealous greed,
Their serpent-wisdom or mere soulless force,
Homeward returns my vagrant fealty,
Crying, "O England, shouldst thou one day fall,
Shatter'd in ruins by some Titan foe,
Justice were thenceforth weaker throughout all
The world, and Truth less passionately free,
And God the poorer for thine overthrow."

I OO

Last Word: to the Colonies.

BROTHERS beyond the Atlantic's loud expanse;
And you that rear the innumerable fleece
Far southward 'mid the ocean named of peace;
Britons that past the Indian wave advance
Our name and spirit and world-predominance;
And you our kin that reap the earth's increase
Where crawls that long-backed mountain till it cease
Crown'd with the headland of bright esperance:—
Remote compatriots wheresoe'er ye dwell,
By your prompt voices ringing clear and true
We know that with our England all is well:
Young is she yet, her world-task but begun!
By you we know her safe, and know by you
Her veins are million, but her heart is one.

THE END

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